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THE

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

OF A

PRIVATE SOLDIER,

WHO SERVED IN

THE FORTY-SECOND HIGHLANDERS,

FOR

TWELVE YEARS,

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DURING THE LATE WAR.

"——— I would serve my king;
Serve him with all my fortune here at home;
And serve him with my person in the wars—
Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him, die for him."

LONDON:

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TO THE

OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS

OF THE

FORTY-SECOND REGIMENT

OF

ROYAL HIGHLANDERS,

THIS NARRATIVE

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

AN OLD COMPANION.

PREFACE,

BY THE EDITOR.

UNDER the pompous title of Editor of this "plain unvarnished tale," I will briefly inform the reader how it comes to pass, that it appears at a period so remote from its author's discharge from the army.

The "Journal of a Soldier of the 71st," fell into my hands; I read it with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret. I had known, from my school-boy days, the Soldier of the 42d, whom I have brought before the public. Laying down the interesting "Journal of the Soldier of the 71st," I said to myself, "Why might not * * * * * * * write the personal Narrative of his Life, as 'a poor, but honest Soldier?'"

I accordingly wrote to him on this subject; for I had often received letters from him while he served in Spain. I requested him simply to transmit to me, from his secluded residence at Old Monkland, in a Series of Letters, a

brief, but faithful relation of what he did and what he saw, from the ti[illegible] he enlisted till he was discharged in 1814. And I held out to him the prospect of pecuniary reward, provided his "Narrative" appeared worthy of publication.

To a man, whom the regulations of the army denied that remuneration which his services seem to claim from his country, this was an inducement sufficiently powerful. I received from him in a short time a folio sheet, closely written, and then crossed in red ink, containing the first portion of his "Narrative." This I read over attentively, and wrote him again, en-

couraging him to proceed and finish that he had begun. When I was in possession of the whole, I examined every drawer and box, in which I am in the habit of keeping papers, for the letters I had received from him while he was in the Peninsula, but my search proved fruitless; and I regret it much, as those letters, which are missing, would have materially added to the Narrative which he wrote from recollection.

Of the merits, however, of the entire performance, the reader will judge for himself; of its originality, the letters which conveyed it from the neighbourhood of Old Monkland, to my

residence in London, are preserved, to vouch for almost every sentence that has been printed. But it is not to be denied, that in transcribing those letters for the press, I have taken such liberties as the grammatical functions of an editor usually warrant. Beyond this licence, I have rarely ventured to alter the original composition of the writer, either by curtailing or adding to the text; and I am incapable of violating the confidence of friendship by expressing, as the opinions of another, who is four hundred miles from me, sentiments of which he would not approve, or which might be in discordance with his unadorned descriptions.

That there may be many inaccuracies discovered by him, I am not prepared to deny, for he was not furnished with proof-sheets of the work, for literal corrections; and this explanation will account for the orthography of some names of obscure places, both in the Peninsula and in France.

The strictures he makes on military movements I am incapable of deciding on; they appear verbatim as he wrote them. his criticisms on the conduct of officers and soldiers are exceedingly natural in the mouth of a man who conceals not his own failings; and they derive a peculiar value from the circum-

stance that the writer, immediately on his discharge, applied himself to humble but honourable occupation, in the very place where his life was first marked by folly. *See pages 4 and 5 of the Narrative.* In this occupation he has persevered till the present time, with as much steadiness as if he were "adding field to field and house to house;" but this is natural to a good citizen and a virtuous parent: for it is to be remarked, that the Author of the Narrative, shortly after his return to Scotland, married an amiable young woman, but without any dowry, as was to be expected from his own situation in life; and he is now the father of three children, whom it is his pride to

support by his industry, and to bring [illegible]m up in the paths of virtue by inculcating the principles of religion on their young minds, and setting before them an example of it in his own conduct.

In reference to the frequent mention which the writer makes of plunder—or, in other words, of the soldiers of the British army helping themselves to the provisions and cattle of the Spaniards and French, it may be sufficient to quote the Memoirs of Sully, wherein that brave soldier, and illustrious statesman, again and again, tells his readers how much booty fell to his share upon particular occasions: and

the same noble authority may be cited in justification of the entire Narrative, and the writer's downright sincerity. Thus, when the King of Navarre was wounded at the bridge of Aumale, by a trooper belonging to the Prince of Parma's army, in the evening, when laying abed, he conversed freely with Sully and others, upon the dangers of that day. "Upon this occasion, I observed," says Sully, in the fourth book of the Memoirs, "as something singular, that among us all who were in the chamber, there were not two persons who could agree in the recital of the most particular circumstances of the action."

It is not meant by this reference to attempt establishing a comparison between an obscure individual and the Duke of Sully; but it is meant to prove with what veracity the writer of this Narrative has recorded the life of a Private Soldier. On several occasions I could point out that Sully's acceptance of booty was a matter of choice to serve the King of Navarre; in every instance recorded by my friend of himself and his comrades enjoying a skin of wine or the carcass of sheep, they were driven to it by necessity, by want, to fulfil their duties as soldiers: but I have no fear that his character will suffer in the eyes of his

countrymen by the acknowledgments he makes. This conviction dictated to me the propriety of allowing, even the minutest faults of his life to remain on record. When balanced fairly with his duty, I flatter myself he will be a gainer rather than a loser by the estimate.

This much I have judged necessary to say in his vindication; for on the preface I have affixed to his Narrative he was not consulted; and as the name of a writer gives little value to truth, his life shall appear anonymous, unless he afterwards chooses to give it publicity. If in Scotland its relation procure him those regards

which he merits, I shall be amply rewarded in having told my countrymen there is so worthy a character in the midst of them.

LONDON,
June 1*st*, 1821.

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THE

PERSONAL NARRATIVE,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

THE RECRUIT.

On the 7th of August, 1803, I became a recruit. Without going into the reasons which induced me to enlist, I will confine myself to what I did, and what I saw, after I became a soldier. I was not more than sixteen years of age; but I was a goodly youth, well proportioned and stout; and I was accepted.

In 1803 the government raised the Royal Army of Reserve. It was into this corps of supplementary militia that I entered; and the manner of my doing so was this.

I left my home on the morning in question, and went to the Black Bull inn, in Glasgow, where there were deputies from a society in Argyleshire, enlisting men to serve as substitutes in the "Reserve." The bounty was twenty pounds, yet it did not tempt me.

There were other two young men there with the society who had engaged. After a good deal of nonsense on their part, and a hearty glass, to dispatch us with all speed to our destination, we were seated in the long-coach for Greenock. Here we staid all night; and the person who accompanied us paid all expenses, fearful, probably, lest we should repent of the step we had taken, and return to the dwellings of our fathers.

I had seen Greenock before; my father was well known in it to some of the chief men; but nobody knew me, yet I anxiously wished to be further from home. Next morning my wish was gratified, for we embarked at Greenock in an open small boat, and crossed over to Dunoon in Argyleshire. On the 10th I was sworn in for the Royal Army of

Reserve, and I then received ten pounds of my bounty. The remainder was to be paid when I should have joined whatever regiment I might be appointed to.

The same day we crossed Loch Fyne to Inverary, where we were taken in charge by a serjeant of the 42d regiment. Thus, you see, I was at once linked with that corps, and my military life has, therefore, been most truly spent amidst soldiers whom their country has repeatedly called brave.

I must beg leave here to exculpate myself from the charge of seeking your applause by any bursts of feeling in which I may indulge: yet, I flatter myself, you will not, on reflection, think me unreasonable in such ebullitions of soul. I made but a fraction of the force that I speak of.

During ten days that I staid at Inverary, my time passed very merrily. To my shame be it told, I allowed myself to be led away by old knaves to the whiskey shops, and having plenty of money, although no drinker of spirituous liquors, I was

really charmed into the thoughtless mirth of

"Jolly companions every one."

But, after coming to myself, I recollected what I had done, and began to think of my family and friends. I had rashly and imprudently abandoned them, having in a manner stolen away from them. I did not let any of them know where I was going, or what I had done! I wrote them a letter, however, but I cannot charge my memory with the recollection of having ever heard of its arrival or delivery; at least, if it did, I received no reply: I merited none. I can now, by retrospection of the past, tax my fancy with the pangs my conscience then endured. I will not attempt the task of describing my feelings:

"How fleet is the glance of the mind!
Compar'd with the speed of its flight;
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift winged arrows of light."

There was little that occurred at Inverary worth mentioning. About the 20th of the

month we got the route for G——, and thither we marched. My conscience being sorely twitched, as we approached that city, I did every thing I could, and used every attempt to quit the ranks. I thought that every person who cast eyes on us knew me. I then abhorred the very name of soldier; but, "I had made my bed; and as I made it, so I must even lie on it." I was compelled, sullenly, to submit to my fate. Every day we remained in G—— appeared a week. Heavily, indeed, did that time hang on my hands. Irksome was this, my first march, as a soldier, to my proud but wounded spirit. At length, however, we got the route for Dumbarton.

Never, never, shall I forget the leaving of G——. Our party was accompanied for miles by relations and friends. As they separated, one by one from us, they filled our hearts with that true grief which finds vent in the burning tear.

From Dumbarton we marched towards Fort George. Our route through the Highlands was agreeable and romantic. It was

agreeable, because we were commanded by a very indulgent officer of the 42d. This gentleman knew human nature well, and what was due to recruits, the materials he was now managing. It was romantic, from the little adventures we were hourly meeting with, amidst

"Moorlands and mountains, rude, barren and bare."

It was agreeable too from the collection of wayward fancy that moved on, cheered by the song of one thoughtless wight, piqued by the gibes of another, solaced by the view of a third more fatigued than one's self, and reduced, finally, to something of military content by the bag-pipe.

In the mountainous districts of the Highlands through which we marched, provisions were sometimes scarce, but more frequently high-priced. At the bridge of Dulsie, our officer, on account of our good conduct during the line of march, called us all in from our billets to the Stage House (it being called Dulsie Bridge), to give us a treat.

We were billeted in the neighbouring country houses, so the piper went round the district about ten o'clock to summon us to head-quarters. This greatly alarmed the inhabitants, who thought the French had landed on the north coast; but they were soon undeceived. On entering the ball-room of the inn, my attention was first attracted by our officer, who had about twenty bottles of whiskey paraded on a table, round which all his men soon gathered. The only *advantage* I got by this affair was the *loss of my hat*. Next day we marched into Fort George.

Here we joined the regiment. It had been embodied a few days previous to the arrival of the party of recruits to which my luckless fortune attached me. This corps of men had been taken charge of by officers and non-commissioned officers from the 42d, and we were named the 2d battalion of the 42d. At Fort George the regiment remained only a few weeks, when it got the route for England. But as I had not been long in the Fort ere I was afflicted with an intermittent fever, the surgeon would not al-

low me to embark with my company, and I, with some twelve others, was left behind. Shortly after, however, my health returned; but it was then winter, and the place became very dull and solitary, as there were few soldiers in it, and it is removed from any town.

Hours, days, and weeks travelled slowly and heavily along during my stay in that lonely Fort; and as I could procure but few books to read, I scarcely knew what to do by way of pastime and amusement. My companions smoked tobacco; I also fell into this stinking practice, as much from idleness as from example.

In process of time I became pretty well acquainted with some of the inhabitants of the Fort, and with them I passed away a good deal of my time; but I was still very dull, being absent from my regiment.

CHAPTER II.

EMBARKATION FOR ENGLAND.—WEELY BARRACKS, AND LEXTON CAMP.

I WAS relieved, at length, from this intolerable monotony of existence by the route for England; and some time in April, 1804, we left Fort George, and embarked on board a schooner for our destination. This was the first trip of any extent on sea, yet I was not sick, and in ten days we arrived safely at Gravesend, in Kent.

I was not much struck with the people among whom I was now thrown. The Thames delighted me; its bosom, sprinkled with ships and craft of all sizes and descriptions; its banks enlivened by villages, farms, and villas. But the people one mixes with, the human beings one sees and converses with, on them we think long, because they attract us much at first sight. The poor sol-

dier's lot is to mingle with the humblest of mankind, no matter what his birth might have been. But my heart was big and proud: I then felt the full force of what I now say: I had to sink, if I would avoid hourly insult—but I did not stoop to meanness. I found that in this rank I must square my mind to my fortune; and it is astonishing how soon one's mind stoops to the level of such a lot: and it is still more surprising, how few that have been brought up in the middle ranks of life, when they enlist as soldiers, can resist the temptations which solicit ready compliance: man is the creature of circumstances; you need not marvel that the most virtuous, the youth who has been decently brought up, and tolerably well instructed, should, in the capacity of a private soldier, very much resemble the man of the world, who "does in Rome as Rome does." And, having said this much, I trust it will appear to you that what many folks would, in common life, deem very gross excesses, are among soldiers matters of ordinary occurrence. Hence, the facility with which I

learned to smoke, and hence also, the facility with which, when billeted in a low alehouse, I learned in England to adapt myself to John Bull. But yet, I cannot say that I imitated the drunken vices of the English it was my lot to mingle with. And here, I cannot help making a comparison between the poor Irish and the labouring English. The lower orders of the Irish are poor, because they are idle, not lazy; but then they are witty. If I observed some excesses among them, the bulk of the Irish are a sober, pious people; and you know those of them who emigrate are: I infer, therefore, that the Irish are an industrious people. My countrymen, I think, excel the others in some things, but are not superior in others. These were the impressions made on me at the time I had an opportunity of examining the character of the people of the three nations.

I would not, however, have you think that I look beyond the working classes, my opportunities of observation did not extend further. As in private life, so in the army, the distinction of rank precludes the possibility

of intimate observation. The common soldier is chiefly conversant with the manners and customs of those denominated the common people: but, a truce to this matter.

From Gravesend we went into Essex, and marched to Weely Barracks, where the regiment was stationed. I liked well enough our marching in England, and I was greatly amused by the difficulty our Highlanders had to understand the common people with whom they talked; and reciprocally, the astonishment of the English at the speech of the Gael, furnished matter of amusement: in fact, some of my comrades knew no language but the Erse, and you may thence judge of their hardships. Next to a total interdiction to use their tongues, was their difficulty of communication by oral signs; and I have frequently witnessed the language of nature (signs and gestures) supply the want of artificial speech.

In a few days we joined our regiment. On the day subsequent to my arrival I was served with a suit of regimentals; and I thought I made a fine figure, when I got on

the red coat. Next day I was sent to drill; to learn my facings and march: I was soon, however, dismissed from that, and ordered on duty.

I had almost forgotten by this time that I had still ten pounds of my bounty to receive, not having been paid it at Fort George. I accordingly went to the paymaster, and asked him for it: he paid me down the money without scruple. I was rich; a lawful prize to the sharks. The old soldiers thought they had got a fine catch, when they met a young one in the barrack-room with so much money. Every one has then his friend, and I had mine, ready enough to assist me in getting rid of such troublesome stuff. There were a few things I stood in need of to put my *kit* in a soldier-like condition. These I purchased forthwith, and the balance of my ten pounds did not last long. The old soldiers never gave me any peace or rest as long as they knew I had a sixpence remaining; and even my watch went in time.

When my money was all gone, I soon

learned to turn out as clean as the best soldier in the regiment, and my captain paid me very marked attention on parade. Cleanliness is one of the military virtues. There was no merit in being the first in point of band-box neatness in an English barrack; none, compared to some more iron-fronted virtues that we had to practise under Wellington.

There were five regiments of us at Weely Barracks, and I do assure you that we had drill plenty, and two brigading days a week. General Sir John Hope did not miss us in our discipline.

About the month of July there was to be a large camp formed at Lexton, near Colchester, so we got the route for that camp, and when it was formed there were about 10,000 men in it. General Greig, if I recollect rightly, was our commanding officer. We had two field days in the week, ten hours at a time, and this was thought very hard work. Alas! how little did those who here complained know what was awaiting them in Spain? We were not harrassed by a pur-

suing enemy, nor chafled by the prospect of starving in the midst of plenty. Before the camp was broken up, we were reviewed by the Duke of York, and shortly after, the second battalion of the 42d got the route for Ireland.

CHAPTER III.

MARCH TO IRELAND.—TUAM.—CAMP OF KILDARE.

OUR march to Liverpool, where we embarked, resembled a party of pleasure, rather than a military movement, part of it being on foot, and part in boats on a canal. The day after we had embarked at Liverpool, it blew hard, and a dreadful storm came on. The vessel I was in had to put back into the harbour; the others, by dint of seamanship, kept on their course for Dublin. Next day, we put to sea again, and in two or three days were landed at the quay of Dublin. The regiment was quartered on the inhabitants, and thus I at once, had an opportunity of studying the character of the Irish, as I had formerly that of the English. I was no philosopher, but I liked to look at men rather than trees, and the human voice was al-

ways more agreeable to me than the murmurs of a brook.

One thing I cannot pass over here, as at the time it made a deep impression on me, not to be obliterated by time, or the prating of the wicked. On Sunday evening, I was shocked at the sight of cards paraded on the table instead of the Bible. Whatever impropriety my own conduct may have shewn, I had always hitherto been accustomed to look to that sacred volume, one of which I had in my knapsack, as the refuge of the mind, and Sunday the time of communing with my God. The people, however, smiling at my simplicity, assured me, that cards were a common Sunday amusement in many places in that country: their report of the popularity of the practice could not reconcile my mind to its propriety.

In a few days we marched from Dublin for Tuam. This march occupied us ten days, and it was by no means agreeable, on account of the bad quarters on which we were billeted; but I must say that the kindness of the inhabitants compensated for the wretch-

edness of their cabins: their means were limited, but their hands were open. At length, however, on the tenth day of our march, we got to our destination; I was very happy to have finished a march which even kindness could not sweeten, nor hospitality abridge its fatigues. The weather was wet, the roads miserable, our clothes and arms in the worst state.

When we got to Tuam, we soon recruited our broken spirits. Our clothes and arms were very speedily in good trim, for we had a general who was very strict. With him, cleanliness and loyalty had the same meaning; of course, we had enough to do; indeed we had, for our officers imbibed the general's notions, and affected his maxims of cleanliness. Now, though I say it, that should not otherwise have repeated the matter, there were no officers more strict on this point than our own, long before they saw Ireland with the 2d battalion of the 42d. It is good, however, when men can make a virtue of necessity, and shape themselves to the will of their superiors: nevertheless,

when we got every thing in a fair way, our duty was not very hard, and provisions being cheap, we were very comfortable in Tuam. And so adroit did I become in the article of dress and cleaning my arms, that I seldom mounted a guard. The reason was this; there were ten men more every day on parade for guard, than actually mounted it. These ten, who were dismissed from duty, were always ten of the cleanest, picked out by the adjutant, without favour for individuals, or affection for their nation. In short, I seldom was on duty at Tuam, from the circumstance I have related, except it were as *adjutant's orderly*.

My time here I can truly say passed away agreeably, but idly, till I commenced card playing. As soon, however, as I turned my attention to that pastime, it occupied my whole leisure, and thus I was for two years the slave of chance; you may call it a passion; if so, it is an innocent passion when moderately exercised, but a vice when swayed by the thirst of gain. In truth, a private soldier, obscure and neglected as he may seem to the

world, may be as much the martyr of passion as the general who commands him. If I may be allowed to judge from what I have seen, gambling corrupts the army more than any other vice. In regard to myself, I was generally fortunate at play, and usually carried away with me a good share of the night's sport. But lightly come, lightly gone; I was none the richer with all my winnings.

After remaining about a year in Tuam, we marched for Lochrea. At Tuam we were beloved by the inhabitants; at Lochrea our quarters were by no means good, and provisions were not cheap. Here our regiment got the complete Highland dress, bonnet, plaid, kilt, hose, and purse.

Our stay at Lochrea was but short, when we got the route for Arcourt, two days march from Lochrea. The duty in these places was easy. Two weeks sufficed for our stay in Arcourt.

This was 1805, when there was a large camp to be formed in the Curragh of Kildare, under the command of Lord Cathcart, so we got the route for that camp. Our

march thither was in the style of a flying camp. The whole camp was formed on the same day, and the troops might be in number from fifteen to twenty thousand men. There could not be a finer piece of ground for an army than this: indeed I never saw a finer for a large encampment and manœuvring an army. And I do assure you that we had enough of exercise, marching and marshalling, for we were constantly at drill, from six o'clock in the morning, till sun-set, except an hour or so at mid-day. Before we went out in the morning, every man had a pint of porter in addition to the regular ration. General Cathcart drilled us to one o'clock daily; our own commanding officer exercised us the remainder of the day. Once we were reviewed by the lord-lieutenant of Ireland.

The most singular sight I ever witnessed was in this camp. I happened one night to be drinking wine (a rare beverage for a private soldier and in Ireland too), with our serjeant-major and the serjeant of another regiment; and when those heroes of cups had become well nigh tipsy, nothing would

serve them but they must needs volunteer to eat the glasses out of which they had been drinking; and so they did. But then they did not stop with this: for, whether from the irritation caused by the fragments of the crystal, or whether from a desire to shew their skill at the broad sword, they set to with their swords, and cut each other pretty much about the hands. The piquet came upon us and took us all prisoners. This being the patrol of another regiment, we treated them with whiskey, and through the interference of the serjeant-major, we all got off without confinement.

Our stay in this camp was about six weeks, when one morning we received orders to break it up, and that same day every regiment struck its tents, and marched off the ground in grand style. But it was evening ere we were all in motion, and our march continued all night, just as if we had been pursued by an enemy. By morning we found ourselves on Marlborough Heath, where we pitched our tents, and staid one night. Next day we all broke up, and every

regiment was dispatched to its quarters. And let me tell you, I was very glad when we got into quarters, for the drill in camp was excessively wearisome, especially for young soldiers, amongst whom I then numbered both as to youth and service. Little did I then imagine that the camp of Kildare was child's play to the campaignings of the Peninsula.

I marched with my regiment from Marlborough Heath to Burr, where we staid a few weeks, and then proceeded to Ballingsloe, where we remained all winter. At this last place I was happy, as a soldier usually is, where duty is light, provisions cheap, and no drill. And what could a soldier want more?

Our next route was for our old quarters at Tuam, where the regiment was comfortable, and for myself I would rather have gone any where else in Ireland, than have remained in Ballingsloe. But every one has some reason for his likings and his dislikings, and I had mine, as you will gather from the following incident.

The company to which I belonged had a private parade opposite to a gentleman's house, in which lived a very pretty girl, whose heart was foolish enough to be smitten with your humble servant. Poor soul! we never paraded that I did not catch her eye at one of the windows. But I little suspected I was the man of her choice, and it was not till one evening that I was sent for to the house that I knew I was her "Handsome, charming Highland lad." I declined the first invitation, thinking it was some scheme to entrap me, or give me a drubbing, Pat not being very nice in the choice of his subjects for mischief. A few nights after I got a second invitation, which I accepted, and went fully prepared for a brush. But, how agreeably was I disappointed? And why, I thought, has not a common soldier a right to an affair of gallantry as well as his colonel? In short, I was perfectly happy here. But at length, as I have said, we marched for Tuam, where the inhabitants received us with the greatest joy. My spirits, however, were depressed, by the recollection of the

girl I had "left behind me," and for several weeks I did not quit the barrack room.

By being shifted into another company, I now had as comrade a fellow who was both a drunkard and a swearer—in fact a bad man; but the cleanliest soldier you could see on parade. I was young and artless; he was old and knowing. He got me persuaded to go with him to the public-house. Why should not publicans be interdicted giving soldiers liquor? My former gaiety returned, for I became a constant sharer in his exploits. He was our tailor, and had plenty of money. On my part, I saved my pay to sport it at my old games of all-fours and whist. I had not gambled since we left Tuam before, but I now played as deep as any one of my regiment, and always without coming off a loser.

I made many narrow escapes, however, of being confined. My good luck at cards seemed to follow me in this also. But I must add to it the good disposition of my serjeant. He could write little more than his own name, and a serjeant has a good deal

of writing to do; so he employed me as his clerk, and like most clerks of great men, I made my place serve me. My good serjeant, too, when I happened not to return at roll-call in the evening, always marked me present, and took the responsibility upon himself. He knew I would not desert, and he thus repaid my clerkship by indulgence. Yet it was much that he risked his own coat for his heedless scribe.

I can still recollect one night I was out with the tailor, and a few other good fellows, and we all got very merry; so much so, indeed, that nothing would serve us but we must needs commence a row with the town's-people, whom we found out of bed. We broke windows and doors, being armed with huge sticks, quarter-staves forsooth—rare articles for bringing a drunken man to his senses if roundly applied. We came off victorious, for good as were our antagonists at the shillela, we were resolved to do or die that night. They were drubbed most lustily, but we did not escape neither. Three of us were captured, and delivered up to the pi-

quet; but in going to the guard-house, I made my escape. I was pursued, but I distanced all my followers, and by jumping through a large puddle, in which I left my shoes, I gave them all the slip. I then made the best of my way to the barracks; but the poor tailor was sent to the guard-house.

This affair caused a second roll-call, throughout every company of the regiment that night, to find out the man who escaped. Either the piquet did not know me in the dark, or feigned ignorance to serve a fellow soldier. I was in my birth when the roll was called the second time, and so far all was well. The two others who had been taken were true in not disclosing my name.

Next day a court martial was ordered for them, but sufficient proof not being adduced to substantiate the preferred charge, the punishment which otherwise would have been flogging, was commuted to a few days confinement in the black hole.

This was a warning to me, and for some time my conduct was very regular. But in the course of a month, all order ceased, and

the regiment presented the curious spectacle of some men allowed to do any thing but commit murder, while others were kept hard at duty, and watched like felons. The cause of this odd medley I shall now proceed to relate.

CHAPTER IV.

VOLUNTEERS INTO THE SECOND BATTALION OF THE FORTY-SECOND; THEN INTO THE FIRST BATTALION.

THE legislature had passed an act for enlisting men into the regular army for a limited space of time. This was a novelty, a tempting bait to the inexperienced; for who that disliked the prospect of indefinite service, but would make his election of limited, of seven years in place of twenty? And orders accordingly came to our regiment for enlisting men for limited service. The officers did all that lay in their power to get all the regiment to volunteer, if possible; and it was to become a regular second battalion of the forty-second.

At first the regiment got all the indulgence men could get. Nothing was wrong that we did, especially the volunteers, if they kept

from murder and theft. They had no duty to stand, nor parades to muster. But the volunteering, with all its blandishments, went on slowly for a certain time. The officers omitted nothing to induce the privates to change service, and take on in the regulars. And they never allowed a fine fellow to rest till they persuaded him to join them. At length they could number 400 volunteers, and those who did not choose to go over with them were sent to Dublin, to be formed into a garrison battalion. I was very far from volunteering when the order came; but I was oftentimes led away by those who changed service; and in about a month I took the bounty. I thought with myself that seven years was not a long time, and perhaps the garrison battalion might be up as long as we. My bounty did not last an age. I spent about a pound daily till the ten pounds were gone. Ten pounds was the bounty for seven years service. If I had those ten pounds sterling now, I think I would know better what to do with them. There's a time for every thing. I certainly should not put it to

liquor now: that is a thing I never taste, nor do I ever think of it, although I was a great lover of it while I was in the army.

My comrade the tailor was a very deep fellow. He took all he could get from the volunteers, and, went with the garrison battalion. When the men that would not volunteer left us, a stop was put to all our former indulgence. Then we had to take our duty, and appear like soldiers. But I was still very foolish. I had my old screen between me and the consequences of my folly, as far at least as the indulgence of my friend the serjeant went. I was cured however of this tax on his kindness in the following manner.

Having been out one night with a few of my comrades, we quarrelled with the town's people. The Irish were hot—our Highland blood was up in an instant. A battle-royal took place. We were twice routed and pursued. The piquet then got scent of us. The captain came in upon us by a back way, and another poor fellow and I were taken. The rest made their escape. Among my

other faults was that of being very forward in whatever was proposed, when I had a glass in my head. Though this was the first time I had been confined since I enlisted (suppose I had often deserved the black-hole), I foresaw nothing but a court-martial. I had an excellent character from my officer, who was ignorant of my secret doings in Tuam. Two nights passed over my head in the guard-house, and no word of a trial. I began to get very uneasy, as this delay boded me no good. Next day a court martial was ordered after morning parade. The commanding officer came to the guard-house to examine the prisoners. The officers of the company I belonged to came there and gave him an excellent character of me; I had myself as clean as a new pin, and he was diverted from his purpose of bringing us to a court-martial.

Though I had thus escaped like a bird from the snares of the fowler, all was not a warning to me, and a few weeks after I was within a hair's breadth of being confined again. I had been on duty to Galway with prisoners, and on our return back a few of us

left the party, and stepped into a cabin on the road side to have some whiskey. I suppose we had more than enough, for on passing some country people that were digging potatoes at some distance from us, nothing would serve us but to discharge our muskets among them. It was a fortunate circumstance. blood was not shed. The diggers made a precipitate retreat from the potatoe-field, and we kept on our march; but it was night before we got into Tuam. The serjeant of the command being a good man, did not report us to the commanding officer on his return. This was a risk, for he knew nothing of us; and as the country people made no complaint against us, we escaped this time also, but you may plainly see it was touch and go work at best.

About a month after this, an order came for a draught of 120 men of our regiment to join the first battalion, then lying in Gibraltar. The remainder of the regiment was to go to Scotland to recruit. The officers tried to get volunteers for Gibraltar, but all that turned out were eight. I was one of

that number. Then I turned my back on my native country to go to a foreign land. I cared not whither I went, north, east, south, or west; my regiment was home, my company my friends in the second battalion, and I expected to find the same or better in the first battalion of the 42d. As the volunteering into the first battalion would not take, it went to the ballot, and in a few days 120 of us marched for the Cove of Cork, where we were to embark.

We staid a few days at Middleton, some miles from the Cove, till the vessel in which we were to embark was in readiness to receive us. On sailing down the Cove I was much delighted with the mountains which surround its serpentine waters. And what adds to the beauty of the sight in a soldier's eye, is the view of the batteries on the faces of the hills. The sight of so many ships too in the Cove was delightful. But alas! how duty, parade, guard, marches, and cleaning arms, take off the soldier's mind from what charms the citizen! I have in my mind compared the dragoon to his horse, and really the

foot soldier is not much better. If not on duty, the soldier is on the look out for pleasure or fun. He may be satisfied with his ration; all are not so. When you see him strolling about lazily, his mind is at work on some project or other. If he has not a penny to keep the devil from dancing a jig in his pocket, nobody knows better how to live without cash. This is philosophy, you'll say; and so it is; for what is all philosophy but observation and experience?

CHAPTER V.

THE ISLE OF WIGHT, AND VOYAGE TO GIBRALTAR.—GARRISON DUTY AT GIBRALTAR.

AFTER a pleasant voyage we arrived at Spithead, and were landed on the Isle of Wight, the paradise of Great Britain, though the pandemonium of the recruits who are drilled in its depôt. What could be more foolish than sending us to drill like lads enlisted but a week? Nevertheless to drill we were packed off, in the same manner as if we had never mounted a guard. There is nothing there but drill, drill, drill, from the rising to the going down of the sun. I thought this stupid, and very hard upon us, who now reckoned ourselves good old soldiers, fit for all duties. Our stay there was short, as two weeks put an end to the tyrant's sway; for the staff serjeants are the most

absolute despots on earth. I can however easily account for the rigour of the Isle of Wight depôt. The recruits brought thither are too frequently the very refuse of society; fellows without principle who desert, and the misconduct of such villains brings down vengeance on all.

Never shall I forget the degraded manner in which we were marched to Cowes, as if we had been convicts for the Hulks. It soured my mind against the Isle of Wight, which, with all its picturesque beauty, I looked on with abhorrence. "If this be the way to make soldiers," said we one to another, "a pest on such making." Though deprived of our freedom of action by our service, we had still the hearts of men. We might not walk whithersoever we pleased, but our minds could range at large. We might not waste the hours of night in revel or in wakes, but our minds were not to be hushed to slumber by the evening gun. Why then break down the distinction between us and the cattle of the field? Why

treat old and tried soldiers, like the scum of a jail delivery?

Soldiers on leaving this place are served out with a sea stock, according to the length of the voyage, ship provisions excepted. We were accordingly paid up for two months; but as if afraid to trust us with the money on shore, a person came on board and paid it us a few hours before we sailed. We then made for Spithead; but the fleet for the Mediterranean was not all in readiness, so we tarried there two weeks, till it should be assembled.

While at anchor at Spithead, the fleet for South America sailed with the expedition commanded by General Whitlock, and he was saluted.

As soon as our fleet was all gathered, we set sail with a fine fair wind. She was a very fine ship we were on board, and a very fast sailing vessel. But besides the 120 of the 42d, there was on board a draught for the 48th regiment then lying at Gibraltar. Their captain was the senior officer, and he

commanded the troops on board, and he was a tyrant. He used to have us on deck day and night, I may say; and some of our regiment always in the forecastle—that was the guard-house. The grog we were allowed he baptized thrice before it was served out. We had not been accustomed to such cask-washings in Ireland, where we drank good whiskey punch, or the *creature* itself, as mild as milk, but as strong as brandy. I was resolved to be up sides with this 48th captain, and I got my revenge; but at the expence of the wishy-washy stuff he meted out to us.

When we had been about a week at sea, I was one night on duty on deck. It blew a tremendous gale; the sea ran mountains high. Our great enemy was snug below. I communicated my plan to my comrade, who was a trusty Highlander, that would as soon be tucked up to the main-yard arm and riddled by marines, as let the cat out of the bag. In an instant we deprived the three-water captain of all his dishes for mixing our grog, by letting them loose to the winds and the

waves of the Atlantic ocean. Next day there was a fine holla-bulloe; how did the dishes get overboard? how came they loose? who sent them adrift? We who knew were mum; and those who didn't know couldn't tell. However, to be revenged on the soldiers of that watch, when his gear was untied, he stopped the whole of our grog during the rest of the voyage.

In sixteen days we reached Gibraltar, and on going through the Strait the Spanish gunboats came out upon us, to try and capture some of the rear of the ships under convoy. Our frigate put about and got in among them, when our tars picked up two of those boats.

The very night on which we came to an anchor at Gibraltar, we were landed, as the fleet was to sail next morning up the Mediterranean. Next day we were distributed among the different companies of the regiment, which, with our augmentation, now counted 1000 rank and file. And here again we were put to drill, as if we had been raw recruits; but ten days closed our awkward

squad duty, and we then took share in the regular service of the garrison.

Duty on this rock is very hard; two nights in bed and one on duty; and king's works every third day. There was no time here for cards; no room for diversion, as at Tuam and Ballingsloe. But it was Heaven compared to the Isle of Wight. At king's works in Gibraltar we had ninepence a day, besides our pay; and one and sixpence when at artillery stores. A soldier in this fortification is hardly ever without money, if he is careful of his earnings. Some of our men made money in it, but a very few, for they were hard drinkers. I liked Gibraltar very well, as we had nothing to do but mind our duty; and although it came frequently, it came regularly, and we had little sentry to stand when on guard. Our provisions were good and cheap, and plentiful. We had four days salt beef, and three days fresh meat, and coffee every morning. The wine too was cheap.

I liked the 1st battalion of the 42d better than both the other regiments I had been in.

I was very much thought of by my captain, and might soon have wielded a halbert, if it had not been for the wine. The regiment was much given to it, and how could I escape, when I could never say *no* to him who offered to stand treat? Then, when I had money, it would not do not to return the civility of my messmates. The soldier's practice proves that he has no use for money, any more than a musket for two touch-holes. In good truth, it burns holes in his pockets, and out it pops to appear in the shape of good fellowship.

I have said that I was very much noticed by my captain, and I was not long with the 1st battalion, when I was put in orders to be made a non-commissioned officer. I was told of this by my serjeant, but I behaved very foolishly to myself, and very rudely to my captain. No man but himself would have allowed me to escape such an insult without a flogging. It was this.

The corporal's duty at Gibraltar is very close, not a minute has he to himself, for when he is not on duty, he is constantly

parading one duty or another, and the place being good for the private soldier, he does not regard the extra pay of the corporal. With this knowledge before me, I went and got an additional stoup of wine, and considering myself primed, I stalked into my captain's quarters, and roundly told him I did not want to be any of his petty slaves! With a father's kindness he only ordered me home to my barracks. When I coolly reflected on what I had done, I thanked my stars that though I had travelled from post to pillar, there was no cord to lash me to either. And from the time I refused to be made a corporal, I kept myself very reserved. I heeded nothing save my duty. I abandoned all company that was likely to lead me astray. I regulated with rule every action of my life for a time. I knew what would follow if I got into any scrape; for I fancied my captain entertained against me a secret grudge; yet I cannot believe he owed me a spite. I was no longer noticed by him as a clean soldier, though I was still more so than ever. I was examined on parade with much

minuteness, in all parts of my dress and arms, and my kit regularly looked into. But all was in order and place. In time this rigorous survey dwindled into the ordinary glance from the buckle to the sphinx*.

* The 42d wear brass buckles in their shoes; and a sphinx is placed on the bonnet, as an emblem of their valour in Egypt.

CHAPTER VI.

VOYAGE TO PORTUGAL.—THE BRITISH ARMY THERE. — ITS MARCH INTO SPAIN.

AFTER being in Gibraltar about a year, the route came in 1808, for the 42d to embark for Portugal. One thousand rank and file embarked; not a sick man was left behind, nor was there a complaint in the regiment. We set sail from the rock with a good wind, and very soon made sight of Cadiz, when we were becalmed for about eight days. We were thence sixteen days in going to the mouth of the Tagus. We lay-to till next day. News reached us, in the interim, that Junot had been beaten, and had surrendered the French army. Soldier-like, we then fancied we had nothing more to do, so little did the common soldiers of the 42d know the immense force Buonaparte had scattered

in swarms over the Peninsula. Our vessels cruised about for two days, and we then got orders to land at Fort Cascaes, about ten miles from the mouth of the Tagus.

There was a French regiment in that fortress, and we relieved all their guards; our colonel receiving from the hands of the French colonel the keys of the place. This regiment of the enemy marched for Lisbon to join the rest of the French army.

The garrison I speak of was very strong, but in bad condition to hold out long, if properly attacked, and it was a miserable place for soldiers that had lived on the fat of the land in Gibraltar. We had no proper barracks, only places made up like guard-beds; and I did not like this change, having always been accustomed to some sort of a bed or other. Here we had no blankets, which made the boards still harder.

In a few weeks we marched from this wretched fort for Quilles, where the British army was encamped. We were served out, I should tell you, with camp equipage before we started.

Of all the regiments composing the army that was formed here, the 42d was the largest as to numerical force, and on inspecting us, Sir John Moore thought and said a great deal of us. After being inspected by Sir John, we were put into brigades. Our stay at Quilles was not long, but short as it was, I had several opportunities of visiting Lisbon. I did not think much of that city. It is so irregularly built, the streets are so narrow and dirty, that it is at once very disagreeable to a stranger, especially to a person who had been accustomed to see towns reared with some regard to convenience and health.

I was delighted with the camp at Quilles; the weather was very fine, and we had our provisions served out regularly and good. I think we were there about three weeks, when we got orders to hold ourselves in readiness to march into Spain. We accordingly marched by regiments through Portugal. The evening of the first day's march our regiment bivouacked, and the company I belonged to took up its quarters in a very

large orchard of orange and lemon trees, which proved very good camp ground. On our march through Portugal we were usually quartered in houses that had been deserted by the inhabitants, when the French army entered the country. Or when convents and religious houses offered us an asylum, we took up our temporary abode in the ancient births of monks and priests. But any place was agreeable after a march of four, five, or six leagues; and if I calculated aright, the leagues assigned us could not be less than four English miles each. And it was something to traverse so much ground, equipped as we were with luggage, in heavy marching order.

At all the towns and villages through which we passed, the inhabitants received us with great joy, as the saviours of their country. The first town of any note at which we halted was Abrantes, where we tarried two nights to be refreshed, and have our arms, accoutrements, &c. put in order. To amuse the British army as much as possible, some of the inhabitants got up a masquerade,

while others, mounted on horses, appeared in the market-place, to display their address in horsemanship. After they had shewn us a variety of manœuvres, by throwing darts at a fowl they had placed in a ring, they brought into the area a half raised bull. Two men then attempted to excite the poor animal, by throwing darts at him. He made great charges at them. One of the men being closely pursued, he turned on the bull, and leaped between his horns, where he sat with apparent safety for a short space. This is what they call bull-fighting. I did not think the animal was half raised, else he might have done a great deal of mischief. That same night the people had a stage erected in the market-place, and a play was performed for our entertainment. I went to see it, but I did not stop long, as I did not understand the language. Thus did the Portuguese of Abrantes encourage the British army, as it passed through their town.

Next day we continued our march till we came to Ciudad Rodrigo, where we stopped a few days to recruit before we entered into

Spain. Ciudad Rodrigo is a very strong garrison town, surrounded by a strong wall. Hitherto our provisions were served out regularly and good: and we had a pint of wine per man each day. Wine was cheap and good, and when we had a little money we got a drop extra.

Our next route was for Salamanca, which we reached in about a week, and marching in this part of Spain was not so fatiguing as in Portugal. Portugal is a hilly country; this part of Spain is a flat country, which made it a good deal easier for the tired soldier.

Our arrival at Salamanca was hailed by the firing of muskets and the ringing of bells, and every demonstration of joy by the people. In this city the British army assembled; but of the various regiments that composed it, there was not one so much admired as the 42d. There were other Highland regiments: our's was perfect in the "garb of old Gaul." The whole attention of the inhabitants was fixed on us. We were a novel race of beings—our dress, except the

red coat, bore no resemblance to that of the other regiments.

The army was quartered in convents, some of which were very large. The one I was in furnished accommodation for 3000 men. All sorts of provisions were here very cheap, as you may judge by the fact, that I could buy four pounds weight of good wheaten bread for about five-pence English money. And I should have been very happy to have wintered here, had our bedding been good, but it was extremely bad, and the winter season in upon us, made it still worse.

We were brigaded very often during the thirty-two days we lay in Salamanca.

CHAPTER VII.

MANŒUVRING OF THE FRENCH AND BRITISH ARMIES.—RETREAT FROM SAHAGUN.

OUR next route was to find out the French army. We marched from Salamanca by brigades. When we had marched some four days the commissariat had a great deal to do to find provisions for us; for the nearer we approached the enemy our provisions became the scarcer. Sir John Moore having got notice that the French army was in cantonments a few leagues from Sahagun, we made for that place. The day before we reached Sahagun, just as we got into our quarters, and were beginning to cook our beef (we always carried a day's meat with us, when we could get it), an alarm was given that the French army had been seen at a little distance. This being news the most of

us had not been accustomed to, we put ourselves in a great bustle, but we were soon under arms and ready for action. I thought it very hard to leave our meat in our quarters, but there was no time to divide a mess, when a division might be made of ourselves as prisoners of war. We had not long been under arms when tidings came that the alarm was false, it being a part of General Baird's army from England, and not the French. General Baird had landed at Corunna, and here he joined Sir John Moore with the handful of troops that had been sent from England. Next day we got into Sahagun. All the British army assembled at this place and in its neighbourhood. The following day our light horse fell in with a squadron of the French, two leagues from Sahagun. They attacked them, and beat them, and made a number of them prisoners. This was the first place at which I felt the scarcity of provisions that pervaded the army: we were served out with flour in place of bread. This reduced us to a twofold duty, baking bread, and cooking meat.

But you are not to wonder that I so often allude to the article of food. We could not live without it; hard duty, in the open air, gave us hearty appetites, and scanty allowance sharpened it. Besides, the lugging along with one his food for the day, his then cooking it, before he can satisfy the cravings of nature; the curious fact that, in the army in Spain, every man was often his own tailor, shoemaker, armourer, cook, commissary, aye, and general too, in a pinch:—this fact you must use as the key of my narrative.

The 42d was quartered in a convent, wherein we found a great store of flour concealed. Some of us soon made our way into it, and took out what we wanted that same night. I spent most of the night in baking cakes, and toasting them before the fire. We were there about four days, I think, when we got orders to be under arms after sun set. Now I thought there was something to be done, and as I had more cakes than I should eat for two days, I distributed the overplus among the mess; for a few only of us had baked, and still fewer had been

acquainted with the secret way into the flour store. I did not know a retreat was so nigh at hand, or else I would have taken more care of my cakes: I expected a battle, a victory, and plenty of provisions,—but that night we commenced the retreat.

When night came on, our light brigade took their march in search, as I thought, of the French army, they being five leagues from Sahagun. We were to attack the enemy next morning by day-light. When the advance of the light brigade was one league on the road, they got orders to return to Sahagun. We were still under arms in the town, and till eleven o'clock that night, when we were dismissed, not knowing at that time the reason. Sir John expected to be supported by the Spanish army that morning on which our's was under arms, and he was fully resolved to attack the French. The Spaniards, instead of advancing to support the British, or themselves attack the French, made sure their retreat: it was a good thing Sir John got notice of this in time, otherwise

the English army might have had enough to do.

Next morning Sir John made arrangements for our retreat. There being a large sum of money here for paying the army, every private soldier got two dollars. It was as well to give us these two dollars, seeing we were obliged to retreat; but it would have been better to have given it all to us, according to our rank, as it was reported to have been destroyed, thrown over rocks, or into rivers on the retreat.

On the following day, December 15th, we took our retreat from Sahagun; every body has heard of that retreat; the ground was covered with snow; it was all the severity of winter. Our first day's march was to Villa Manana, a distance of four leagues, and a sore day's march it was, on account of the deepness of the roads. We came to a large river, two miles from Villa Manana, where we stopped a few hours, till all the baggage was got over in a boat. We forded it thus.

There had been a pretty strong flood in the river, which was now from 3 to 4 feet deep. At the ford we had to fix our ammunition on the top of our knapsacks, to prevent it from getting wet in fording the river: this was very disagreeable work at that inclement season. Though we doffed our hose and sheen, and kilted our kilts above our weams, all of us did not escape a ducking.

We were all quartered in Villa Manana; but very strong piquets were sent to the river to stop the progress of the French. That night we were served out with a pint of wine and half a pound of bread each man. Soldiers on a retreat, or a rapid advance, are always on the look out for something besides the bare ration; so, after night, there were three of the mess I belonged to, volunteered to go on a private foraging party. I was always forward when there was any thing to be done in this way, after the day's march was over, and I was one of the three I now speak of. We were wandering about for a couple of hours before we met with success; at length we fell in with two large loaves,

each of them six pounds weight: we then went in search of wine. The wine in that part of the world is all kept outside of the towns in large vaults below ground. We found them out: but we were not the first: we filled our canteens and a camp-kettle with wine, and returned to our mess; we soon forgot the hardships of the march.

Next morning we were turned out two hours before day; but there were no orders for us to march or fight, so we remained under arms till the general should receive his commands: we were then dismissed, but ordered to parade again in two hours. During this interval, the inhabitants lodged complaints against the army for the loss of their wine and other articles.—I abhorred stealing; the appropriating of the wine was not theft in our judgment; at any rate, I never volunteered upon any party to injure the persons or property of the Spaniards. I plead guilty to foraging for the mess,—not for myself in any one case. The brigade was formed, and the general, Lord William Bentinck, gave us a long speech about the danger of molesting the inhabitants.

Next morning we left Villa Manana. There were a great many of the 42d got drunk, and some of them lagged behind in the line of march, and became prisoners to the French. When our day's march was over, there was a drum-head court-martial held, and 24 tried and flogged. But our Colonel was enraged, on account of being severely reprimanded that day by Sir John Moore, on the line of march.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RETREAT CONTINUED.

FROM the time I entered Spain, I could not say I had ever been unfit for any duty I was called to go on. We had very bad weather after leaving this place, and the roads were very deep. My last pair of shoes were then on my feet, and the badness of the roads made me feel very much, on account of my shoes, not knowing how they were to be replaced, and I was sure a prisoner I would be, if ever I came to pad the hoof. The very prospect of want is worse than actual privation. I had around me hundreds in my condition: I had seen hundreds fall victims to what I dreaded. I shudder as I reflect on the groanings of the dying, and the curses of the living, who walked on in despair.

But we continued our retreat very rapidly. On new-year's-day morning our provisions

were all eaten up. Never shall I forget that new-year's morning. It was of a Sunday too. Men, who on that day had been wont to bless God, imprecated their Maker. Nor did the authors of their calamities lack the widow's curse. Our provisions were done, and how to get more we knew not. My messmates that remained were famishing, and I proposed another foraging party. Great as the risk was, there was no alternative between it and death by starvation. "I will go for one," said I; "will any one go with me?" "I will," said one man; "And I," said another. We soon got ourselves ready, with our bayonets fixed on sticks; we were not an hour out when we fell in with ten pounds weight of bread, and a pig's skin full of good wine. In this part of the country the wine is all kept in pigs' skins. We came home to our comrades; and we did not want for the first day of the year 1809; but those that won't fight for their victuals won't fight for their king.

Next day we entered the mountainous district that lay between us and Corunna.

By this time the army was in a wretched condition, from the want of provisions, shoes, and blankets; and insubordination began visibly to shew its capricious front in more brigades than our's. When we got upon the mountainous roads we found them covered with deep snow; and our march that day was very long and fatiguing. When we halted, neither barracks nor convents offered us an asylum; the earth was our bed, the sky our covering, and the loud winds sang us to sleep. However, we had a pound of beef a man served out to us that night; but we had neither wood nor water to cook it. There were a few old houses by the way side; their ancient inmates had fled: in half an hour these houses were in ruins. The next thing was water; it was at a great distance, so we took the snow and melted as much as cooked our beef. We sat on our canteens and knapsacks by the fires all night, for we could not lie down on the fields of snow.

We took our march before day next morning, and came to Villa Franca. Here General Baird had left the stores which he

brought with his army from England. My shoes, at this time, were torn in pieces by the roads; but I had contrived to lash them to my feet with strings stripped from parts of my dress. As we halted at Villa Franca a few hours, I was in great hopes of getting a pair of shoes. Two days biscuit and three days salt beef and pork were served out to us man by man; but there was no time for shoes and spirits to be given us, though there was plenty of both in the store. There were a great many of the men who got shoes, but it was by forcing their way into the store, and breaking the casks in which the shoes were packed up. When I saw this, I endeavoured to get a pair; but the crowd was so great, I could not get near the entrance, and I could not tarry, for the bugle was sounding to fall in. The provost then came with his guard of horse, and cleared the store. In a short time, notwithstanding our wretchedness, and wants, and bleeding feet, all that was in the store was destroyed. I would to God that I had seen no other instance than this of "man's inhumanity to man."

There was a man of the company I belonged to that got three pairs of shoes; I offered him three dollars, all the money I had, for a pair: the rascal would not give them to me, expe ting more for them before we got to Corunna. The road, at this part of our terrible journey, was mid-leg deep to wade. It soon stripped my poor lame feet of the miserable coverings I had so long contrived to cover them in, and I had to pad the rest of that day's march barefooted. The very store-shoes went to pieces on this road in one day, but they were very bad.

Night coming on, we halted at a small village. Part got into houses, and part had to lie out all night in the open fields. The company I belonged to got into a church; we were cold and wet and hungry. We soon procured a light from the pan of a musket lock, and the furniture of the sacred edifice served us for firing all night; but, though we lay here very comfortably sheltered, the gloomy light shed on the men, some lying down, others round the fire, ot ers going out and coming in, gave the

whole a singular appearance, and more than one highlander crossed himself ere he left the place he had polluted.

Next morning we marched before day. I had, during the night, procured a pair of old shoes from a comrade, and they kept my feet off the stones for a few days, but they were very sore and painful, being all lacerated the preceding day. It was my turn for duty that morning; I had been warned for the provost's guard: we were to march in the rear of the whole army. It was far in the day before the march commenced. I had now a full view of the miseries of this army: it was the most shocking sight to see the road that day after the army had passed. Dead horses and mules and asses, and waggons, and baggage of all descriptions lay at every step, and men and women and children that were not able to keep up with the army implored our aid, or, in the bitterness of their soul, cursed their hard fate, or lay dying beside the dead, and in their last moments seldom breathed a prayer of forgiveness; so much did their mis'or-

tunes annihilate all the feelings of their nobler nature.

It was ten o'clock at night before the provost's guard reached head-quarters, when we were dismissed from this duty; but the 42d was a league in advance on the road. There had been but another man of my company and myself on the provost's guard; so, after passing the night the best way we could among the troops at head-quarters, we started next morning, before the army was put in motion, that we might join our comrades: indeed, we passed that night comfortably. We fell in with some of the artillery at head-quarters. Artillerymen and the 42d, and the Guards are always good friends. We got into a house, in which the artillery had their horses, and among the straw of the poor brutes we found ourselves in clover. I could not move from the soreness of my feet, I lay down at the side of a tired horse; poor animal, it seemed to sympathize with me; I am sure it felt as much as I did. We had still some salt beef and pork. My comrade could walk, and out he went to forage; after going

his rounds he returned, bringing with him about four pounds of potatoes; we then made a famous supper.—Hunger makes coarse fare fine; fatigue, hard beds soft.

I have said, that we started next morning before day, to reach our regiment, which was a league in advance; but we did not overtake it till the men were telling off for quarters. There was no town or village here; only a few houses by the side of the road; there was a company sent to each house: our company had very fine quarters that night. It is the soldiers' practice when they go into any house to make a complete search through it, as if they were a parcel of constables with a search warrant: we got up to the garret, and there we found it full of potatoes, and chestnuts, and onions, and garlick. This was a fine chance for the hungry soldier. We took care, after feasting sumptuously, to boil as many of the potatoes as we could carry, and onions to season them, and roasted chestnuts to dry our mouths, as a dragoon would give his horse hay after a hearty drink of water. If we did not look

after ourselves, there was none else to cater and cook for us.

Next morning we left this place before day-light. We marched all day, and when night came on we halted a few hours in a field, and started again, jogging on till next day at ten o'clock in the forenoon: we then halted. This was Lugo. Every house in the town was filled with soldiers of one regiment or another, some time before the 42d arrived: we were compelled to seek our quarters where we could in the adjacent country-houses. The house I was in was in poverty, the inhabitants having got every thing out of the way before we arrived; it was well for them, assuredly we should have plundered them: yet, in all this we were only acting on a small scale, and by the direst necessity, what an Alexander or a Cæsar would have done;—nay, what they did,—what is done every age by great generals and ambitious monarchs.

Orders came to us to attend upon the commissariat for rations; and so we did; for these were the first provisions that had been served

out regularly to us for the last five days past; and what was it they served out to us? a pound of flour, and a pint of wine, and a pound of fresh beef; but before our beef was half boiled, the bugle was sounded to turn out the whole. Then the scramble commenced, tearing the half-boiled beef in pieces, every one catching what he could, and gobbling the wine.

The fact was, the enemy were upon us unawares; their cavalry appeared with a rifleman mounted behind every dragoon; and before we got in order they were engaged with our piquets: every man, as he got ready, ran to the assistance of the piquets; our quarters being hard by the point of attack, we were the first on the ground, to the support of the piquets; when our brigade was formed, the French fell back. We took up our position in close column that night; the night being very cold, we collected all the wood we could find to keep on large fires. I was very unwell that night, and wrapping myself up in my great coat I lay by the fire. Our officers, poor fellows, sat by us, roasting

potatoes all night; folks say, "like master like man;" it was like man like officer here. Hunger, like death, is a ruthless leveller. Some of our good highlanders went out to forage; no men in the army were their match on this midnight duty: they are perfect *catarans:* if they came to a farm house, and wanted a hen or two, they would merely apply a brimstone match to its beak; the poor hen gave one sneeze and dropped down lifeless! no roost was safe, if there was no dog to give the alarm: but I was going to tell you of our foragers. They belonged to my mess; they did not like to see their officers eating potatoes. "By the cross, they'll have potatoes and point, if there be aught in the land," said a trusty Argyleshire man; and he was as good as his word. The foragers returned with a sheep and a kid, and their plaids full of Irish fruit. There was nothing done that night but cooking, as we did not know but we would be off before day.

We got under arms before day-light next morning, as is the usual custom of warfare, when in front of an enemy. I was still very

unwell and feverish, but complaint was unavailing; where all were suffering, there was none to listen. Sir John formed his line of battle, but the French fell back, as the strength of their army had not come up to them. We were dismissed, with orders that no man should be seen from the ground his regiment occupied. By the afternoon I got better, the fever and head-ache having left me.

CHAPTER IX.

MARCH CONTINUED.

ALL the baggage and the women were sent forward from Lugo, on the day the army had arrived there. This was a good plan. The baggage was safest in Corunna, fight or retreat; the women, poor souls, were in the veriest wretchedness; they were well out of the line of march, for they had been a sore incumbrance to the army all the way till now.

We stopped on this ground, on which we offered the French battle, all day. About eight o'clock at night we received orders to put on large fires to make the enemy believe we were still encamped. At nine we commenced our retreat again, and marched all night and next day till two o'clock; we then halted at a small village, wherein there were some stores of rum and blankets. We

had had a great deal of rain and sleet that day; but we trudged on in spite of the pitiless plash of the pelting storm. That night our quarters were in the fields; and nothing could be more disagreeable; I was as wet as a drowned rat; every stitch upon me was soaked; and in this poor state I had the mire for my bed. We were served out with an allowance of spirits; a quart among six men; I do believe it saved many a life. Every one got a blanket who chose to carry it; this was an hospital store; the blankets were clean when we got them. There were no provisions of any kind in this store. I took one of the blankets, determined, if I could not get into an hospital, to have something to serve me instead. This was a God-send. We tarried here till about nine o'clock at night, and then took the road again.

I may say this was a constant march; and on this day I was again reduced to my bare feet; not a shoe could I get. The pieces of blanket I tied round my soles soon became shreds: miserable sinner! I was now quite

careless about my fate: I heeded not man; I cared not if I fell into the hands of the French; I was harassed out of my very life. Still I continued on the line of march with the regiment for four hours. Sleep at length overcame me, and I would be marching and sleeping, literally walking asleep, till I would come bump against the man in front of me. I often thought that if I could get a convenient place, I would lie down and take a nap, let the consequences be what they might. By this time there were not 300 men with the regiment out of the 1000 who entered Spain: many had fallen a sacrifice to the hardships of fatigue, hunger, and disease, on the line of march, and many more had been taken or massacred by the French, who pursued us.

As we plodded on, some haystacks presented themselves to our view, and I resolved to repose a little. I was not many minutes down, when I felt so cold and stiff that I could not sleep. I got up again, but my feet were very sore, as if I were walking on a card for wool. I made up to the re-

giment in the course of an hour: it was like getting to my father's door, to join my comrades once more.

We continued our march till eleven o'clock next day, when we reached Britanzes. All that came in of our regiment to this town were 150 men. We had not an officer to carry the colours; all fell behind: but while a man was left, the 42d's colours would be where they were safe. This shews what the retreat to Corunna was. I have not language to express what hardships I endured; and if I were to tell you all the men said of this retreat, you would think I had fabricated libels on the memory of Sir John Moore, the ministry at home * * *.

At Britanzes there were all sorts of stores for the British army: provisions we wanted very much, having got none since we were served out with the pound of flour at Lugo (our commissariat had nothing to do with the sheep and kid).

I was for duty as soon as I reached Britanzes, though I was 30 men before my turn, on account of the men who were

behind. I had a pair of shoes served out to me before I mounted guard. I had been a poor miserable being before, trailing my musket after me, and drawing one leg after the other for many a long league; and I felt in shoes, as no monarch ever felt on a throne. The very feel of these necessary articles on my poor scorched feet was heaven upon earth. I can even now feel all my flesh creep on my bones, as I reflect on the joy and ecstasy of my soul when I put on the shoes I now allude to. No soul but of him who shared the miseries of that march, amidst similar privations, can have any fellowship with mine in the reminiscence of its horrors.

I was for duty, I said; I was: a corporal and three men were ordered to the house of the chief magistrate. I was one of that guard. When we got there, we were used very kindly. Wine and bread were sent us. This was a feast; and in a few hours after our own rations were sent us; biscuit and rum. At all events those who placed us at the house of the chief magistrate of Bri-

tanzes were resolved he should not suppose the men who guarded him were camelions. I say nothing. We had plenty, and were in good hopes there would be no more want of provisions, having only one day's march to Corunna.

The army left Britanzes next morning. I did not leave the town with the regiment. Our guard was taken to assist in destroying stores. All were thrown into a river. We made up to the regiment before it got into Corunna. When we came in sight of the sea we fancied all was well. When I saw the vessels in the harbour, I was so rejoiced, that in a few hours I was a new man again. What is man made of that he can endure all this? How comes he to adapt himself to such mysterious fortune? These and many other reflections crowded on my mind at the sight of the salt sea. We had toiled to reach it, and its stormy bosom gave us joy. Hannibal's men, I had read at school, were spurred on by the recollection that the sea was behind them, and if they retreated to it they

must inevitably perish; we advanced by the thought that if we could but reach it, our salvation was sure.

On the day that the army left Britanzes, it moved off about nine o'clock in the morning; and as soon as the guard I had belonged to, destroyed all the stores by throwing bread, beef, and rum into the river, we followed the army as fast as our legs would carry us. Having got up with the army, it was halted in a body to search the knapsacks of the poor men for plunder. We who had been on the work of destruction were made prisoners, the moment we came up with the army, as it was not known we had been on that duty. However, as soon as this fact was established, we were sent to join our regiment. This search took place in consequence of a gentleman's house that had been plundered. The booty was not discovered. The line of march was then continued, and we arrived in Corunna by the afternoon.

CHAPTER X.

BATTLE OF CORUNNA.

CORUNNA is a fine sea-port town, with a strong wall around it. We were all quartered in the town. Our regiment was in a convent; and I hoped this might be the last time in my life that I slept in the mansion of monks.

It was proposed that the army should be embarked next day; but alas! all the transports had not arrived at Corunna to take us on board. There were a few into which the sick, the baggage, and the cavalry horses that were good for any thing were embarked. The other horses deemed unfit for service were shot on the beach—an awful sight. It was some days before the transports got round from Vigo.

In two days the main body of the French army made up for Corunna. The vessels had

not now come round. Sir John Moore was obliged to draw his men out of the town to stop the progress of the enemy, who had taken up a very strong position about three miles from Corunna. Sir John took up a position half a mile from the enemy. There were a few shots exchanged at the taking up of our position. Next day we were busied in erecting huts. That same afternoon the fleet came round into the harbour. Why we did not that night embark has always been my wonder. I saw nothing to prevent us then; but a private soldier is not allowed to think. Hear, see, and obey. In this magic triangle all his functions concentrate; and when had he the privilege of judging? Yet somebody thought on that day when 150 of the 42d came on with the colours. I suppose Sir John wanted to get every thing on board that could be of any service to government before he would draw his army into the town.

Again, on the morning of the 16th of January, we could see the French getting into very large columns. I thought they had been strongly reinforced that morning,

About ten o'clock they advanced with a few cannon in front of the brigade to which I belonged: it was the 1st brigade, and was composed of the 4th regiment of the line, about 800 strong, and the 50th, about 600 men, and the 42d, about 800. This was our strength before the battle. The stragglers and weak men had got up to the army by this time. I must here reconcile this language with what I said before, when we had not an officer to carry the colours: the fact is, that the officers had themselves fallen behind, through main fatigue; so had hundreds of the men; though I believe many poor fellows did not know what to do. I have heard some say, "It is better to fall behind, and be taken prisoners;" but I thought this a very foolish notion, as the march into France to the prisons was longer than to Corunna: but others would say—"On, comrades, on; we will have better days when we get to Old England;" and the prospect of being soon in our own land made us bear a little better with these hardships; but the earnest prayer of all was to

take up a position and fight, and conquer or die on the spot, rather than be harassed night and day in the manner we were.

We often thought it was very hard to bring such a fine army of men to a country like Spain, to die with fatigue, and hunger, and cold, to assist a cowardly set of Spaniards. We met part of their army in the mountains, going like as many flocks of sheep and the dogs after them, every one, as we supposed, making the best of his way to his own home. On the retreat to Corunna, I thought a soldier's life the most wretched and miserable situation of any that man could be placed in.

But I have been wandering from the ranks. We were looking at the French advancing with a few cannon in front of the 1st brigade: our men did not mind this till about ~~twelve~~ o'clock, when a few shots were fired from the enemy's battery. Some of their balls fell among our huts, and we were then very soon under arms. Five minutes sufficed. We had two field pieces at the right of our brigade. The enemy

was then seen advancing, in two very large compact columns, down on our brigade: this seemed to be their planned attack. Sir John was soon on the ground where the attack was expected to be made. Our artillery fired a few shots, and then retreated for want of ammunition. Our flankers were sent out to assist the piquets. The French columns soon formed their line, and advanced, driving the piquets and flankers before them, while their artillery kept up a close cannonade on our line with grape and round shot. A few of the 42d were killed, and some were wounded by the grape shot. We had not then moved one inch in advance or in retreat. Sir John came in front of the 42d. He said, "There is no use in making a long speech; but, 42d, I hope you will do as you have done before." With that he rode off the ground in front of us. Sir John did not mention Egypt; but we understood Egypt was the meaning of his expressions, as Buonaparte's Invincibles were the last the 42d was engaged with. Sir John was about thirty yards in front of

the regiment when he addressed us. I heard him distinctly.

I had thought nothing of battle till now; we were within reach of the enemy's shot. There was a kind of fear on me which I think every man is struck with at first. I was never in a great battle before. Some other time I'll tell you more of this.

This ground, on which both the French and British were, was very bad for making an engagement, being very rocky and full of ditches, and a large valley between the two positions. The French army did not advance very rapidly, on account of the badness of the ground. Our colonel gave orders for us to lie on the ground, at the back of the height our position was on; and whenever the French were within a few yards of us, we were to start up and fire our muskets, and then give them the bayonet.

They came up the hill cheering, as if there were none to oppose them, we being out of their sight: when they came up to the top of the hill, all the word of command

that was given was — "Forty-second, charge." In one moment every man was up with a cheer, and the sound of his musket, and every shot did execution. They were so close upon us that we gave them the bayonet the instant we fired. The confusion that now ensued baffles all my powers even of memory and imagination—pell-mell, ding-dong—ilka man gat his birdie, and many of us skivered pairs, front and rear rank: to the right about they went, and we after them. I think I see the grizzly fellows now running and jumping, as the Highlanders, laughing and swearing, and foaming, stuck the pointed steel into their loins. We followed them down to the valley, and stopped not for general or commanding officer; but still on, in the rage and wrath of the Highlanders. When we had driven them in upon their other columns, we ourselves retreated, but not pursued, and took the advantage of a ditch that was in the valley, from which we kept up a constant fire on the enemy till dark.

All the time I was in that ditch I was standing up to the knee in mud. I had a narrow escape here: it was within a hair's breadth. In assisting a man that was wounded to the top of the ditch, we were no sooner upon it than a shower of grape shot was poured upon us, which killed the wounded man and my comrade, who was helping him up. I got the feathers blown out of my bonnet by one of the grapes: then I soon took up my old station in the mud-ditch.

There was nothing ever surprised me so much as the conduct of the French commanders that day: their men swarmed like motes in the sun; their columns might have eaten us up at a mouthful, so numerous were they, and so few and weak were we. Why did not Soult send his generals to devour us? to make us all prisoners? The fellows whom the poor weak 42d put to the rout, were ten times our number, yet they fled like a mob of women and children.

As we pursued them down the hill there was a poor Frenchman sorely wounded, and

on his knees, his hands uplifted, and pleading for quarter. My next man, a robust Highlander, in his rage, exclaimed, "You Buonaparte man! she'll run her through." With a sudden jerk of my musket I threw his on his shoulder, and the poor fellow's life was saved: if he still lives, and could hear this, he would know that his preserver lives also. We were in full speed then of his comrades, and far past him, before my countryman brought his piece to the charge again. The Highlander thanked me many a time afterwards; and used to add, "The deed would have been done but for you, John—I was in such a rage at the time."

Sir John was killed a little after we charged the French: I think I was within 100 yards of him then; he was a little, as you would say, in rear of the left of the regiment, when he was struck with the fatal ball. I know nothing of his funeral at night; I never heard any of the regiment speaking about it; therefore I conclude none of our men attended it. General

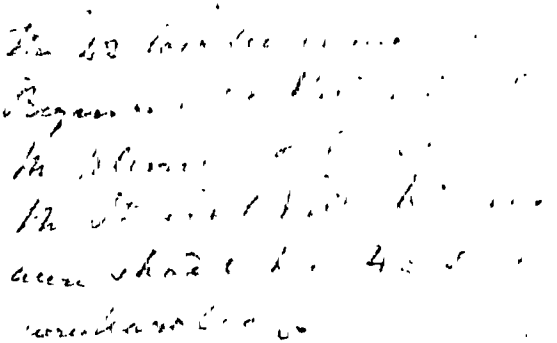
Baird, next in command, lost his arm; the command then fell upon Sir John Hope.

We stopped in the ditch till about eight o'clock at night: we then retreated to our old position, where we staid till eleven o'clock, when we received orders to retreat to Corunna, and embark. We left behind us, however, two men of a company, to keep up large fires that we had kindled to deceive the French.

I was very happy to hear the orders for our embarkation, for sure I was that the enemy would renew the attack next morning, and give us a complete beating: but my heart was filled with sorrow by the news of our brave commander's death, and the loss the 42d sustained.

Though, in a former part of my narrative, I have said there were but 150 of us came into Britanzes, there were a great many who had lagged behind that joined us at Corunna before the 16th. We were, therefore, reinforced, as it were; but still we were not the heart-strong 1000 men that landed

some months before at the Tagus; and thus you will see how we could afford to lose 160, in men and officers, killed and wounded in the action of the 16th.



CHAPTER XI.

EMBARKATION AND VOYAGE TO ENGLAND.

As soon as we got down to the harbour, the boats of the transports and ships of war in the bay were in readiness to receive us; and we were embarked with a degree of celerity I never saw before. But what handy fellows the tars of Old England are in danger and difficulty! How steady and ready-minded! Before day in the morning of the 17th, I think all the army were embarked. How happy I was when I got my feet off Spanish ground! But I had yet another peril to escape: there was no order or regularity in the embarkation. I mean as to regiments. Every man jumped into the first boat he came to, and the boat put them on board the first vessel it could reach, and in which there was room on deck.

The boat I was on board swamped when we reached a transport's side, and it was with a deal ado that all. lives were saved: but a ducking was softer than a bump from a round shot. There were upwards of 400 on board of the transport I found shelter in; and we had no room for some time to lie down. There were men of ten different regiments on board her. This shews the poor condition we were in. Oh! my companions! The British army embarked in as poor a condition as ever an army did, being in want of every thing, destitute even to the bare thread of life, and worn down to the grave by fatigue and cold, and hunger and disease.

As soon as the French knew that the British army had left its position they were soon after us: they brought their cannon down to the beach, and threw some shot amongst the vessels; and by eleven o'clock next forenoon, I suppose there was not a ship but had to cut her cable, and leave her anchors in the harbour. There were two struck on the rocks, and were lost, but

all hands were saved. When I found a convenient place to lay myself down on board, I was so fatigued from want of rest, that I got into such a sound sleep that I lay in it for about twenty-four hours. I awoke as if from the tomb. God help me! how the sea and sky all around rejoiced me: and it was night too; and the wind was contrary and unfavourable; but it was the sea we were on, not Spanish ground.

The wind was not fair for us, and the fleet was tacking, and the night was very dark. The men on the watch were not on the alert, and another transport ran foul of us, and you would have thought that the two vessels would have gone to the bottom in one moment. The cries of the women, and the rushing of every one below upon deck, made it very alarming. The two vessels were in this condition for about an hour: they had got entangled in their rigging, and it required the exertions of all to right them.

When we came within sight of England, the admiral made signal for the fleet to sail

away for Portsmouth; and those vessels that could not make that port were to put into the first they could reach. Our vessel was much damaged, and the captain made for Plymouth. All the rest of the 42d landed, I believe, at Portsmouth: but at Plymouth they (I do not know who) would not let us land without orders from the war office, as if it could signify where such miserable beings were thrown ashore among friends. We accordingly remained at anchor here till orders came down from London for our wretched transport to go round to Portsmouth. By some mistake, the wind was not commanded to blow fair; it blew for two weeks contrary to our orders; so we could not get out of the harbour. Judge of the miserable plight we were in; so many poor wretches on board so small a ship might have told them (the folks who bade us go round) that disease would soon relieve them of our wailings. A fever broke out amongst us: then was the time to hear the imprecations of the living and the curses of

the dying, perishing by inches after they had endured such incredible hardships.

Another order came down from London for us to land at Plymouth. O God! did such tender mercies give our hearts courage at Corunna? then might we have escaped the mockery of this etiquette. But it's all over: yet I cannot forget the inhabitants' goodness. Receive, O people of Plymouth, this tribute of gratitude from one of the wretched beings your generous bounty saved from perishing: you made a subscription for us; you gave the poor destitute widows that had survived, and the poor fatherless children, flannel, and clothes, and comforts; you covered the naked and fed the hungry; for you may well recollect how naked, and bare, and famished, and squalid, the poor women and children were; you beheld us all a poor dejected miserable looking set of soldiers as ever landed in England; some with bonnets and others without, some with shoes and others barefooted; some with their fire-arms, and others

defenceless, as nature made them; our clothing in rags; our hair and beards overgrown: but ye relieved our miseries, and the blessing of him that was ready to perish be multiplied to you.

CHAPTER XII.

A SHORT RESPITE IN ENGLAND.

We continued our march to Exeter, where we stopped four days to recruit ourselves, and get shoes and shirts. We were twenty-eight days on the march, as we did not take long stages, and we had two halting days in the week. All this made the march comfortable, and having two shillings a day, we got a little beer and recruited fast.

The inhabitants through that portion of England we passed were envious of each other to shew us kindness; and with many a pint of good ale was I treated by most respectable people, as they asked me, and I related to them the tale of our retreat to Corunna. In one town through which we passed, all the people came out to meet us; there was a feast for us, and casks of

beer paraded in the streets to treat the few of the 42d thus wandering on to head quarters. Next morning we had a hearty breakfast from them, and they placed boughs of laurel in our bonnets or hats.

The regiment was quartered at Shorncliff Barracks. The long march through England made our party very healthy. We found, on our arrival at the regiment, that a great many men had died of a fever from the excessive fatigue they had endured, and the privations to which they had been subjected in Spain.

After we had arrived at Shorncliff we got all the indulgence any regiment could desire; and our officers who had survived the disastrous retreat to Corunna and the action of the 16th January, 1809, were far more like brothers and friends, than men employed in a military command. We had no drill for a long time; and there arrived an order from the war office, that all the men who had returned from Spain should have coffee every morning. We had, besides, plenty of fine porter and ale, so we

recruited very fast, and soon forgot the retreat to Corunna.

After coming home, I got a pass to repair to London, and see a brother I had there: he received me with all the kindness imaginable. I was in the full uniform of my regiment when I popped in upon him: but my humble dress was no bar to his paying me every attention, and walking out with me that day. Next morning I found, in my bed-room, an entire suit of plain clothes, which I was requested to put on: I did so. This was the first time I had seen any of my family since I enlisted; and the first in which I was in a dress so novel as the habit of a citizen.

I remained with my brother ten days, and during that time, I visited every thing worth seeing in London.

After joining my regiment again, on the expiration of my passport, an order arrived for the 42d to be filled up as soon as possible: at the same time the Scots and Highland militia got leave to volunteer into the regulars. Accordingly, we sent officers and

non-commissioned officers to recruit among those regiments of militia. A great number of excellent men volunteered into the 42d, and we were soon a fine strong regiment again.

The route then came for us to march for Canterbury. During our stay in this fine city, the regiment thought of presenting a sword to the Colonel for his goodness, and in token of our high opinion of his bravery: we, therefore, made a subscription for that purpose. Every private man subscribed a day's pay, and every non-commissioned officer two. This sum purchased a very handsome sword for old Stirling.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXPEDITION TO WALCHEREN.

We were not long in Canterbury when orders came for us to hold ourselves in readiness to march and join the forces assembling for the Walcheren expedition. The fleet was then mustering in the Downs. We marched to Ramsgate, and embarked on board the transports collected to receive us. After laying at anchor a few days in the Downs, the fleet sailed in two divisions. This was the grandest spectacle I ever witnessed: to see so great a number of soldiers and sailors leaving England at one and the same time, the sea covered with ships, all sailing along with a fine fair wind, —I shall never see the like again: to hear the bands of music playing martial airs, the voices of the masters with their speaking trumpets, the piping of the boatswains, the

parting and saluting guns—I shall never hear such music again.

That same night we got within sight of French Flanders; the other division making for Walcheren. We lay-to that night, and next morning we got close in upon the shore, but still out of reach of the shot: we then came to an anchor for the night. We were exactly between Ostend and Flushing. We received orders to be in light marching order next morning; and our knapsacks were to be left on board. We were all ready next morning by seven o'clock, and the boats alongside of each ship: in this position we remained till it was hard upon the gloaming, ignorant of the cause of such delay; but we had nothing to care for, but to hear and obey, and keep our faces to the enemy in battle.

The Earl of Chatham was accountable for all; our own colonel for the 42d's behaviour. Next day we were under the same orders, and ready at the same time. There was a stop put to our debarkation again.

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The third day we were in the same order; but still nothing done. This kept the soldier very unhappy. What was the reason of this I could never learn, though I asked every one I durst ask; but I supposed it was to draw the attention of the enemy away from Flushing.

The following day there came on a great storm, and our fleet were all riding at anchor in an open sea, a great range of sand-banks on the one side, and the enemy on the other. The storm came on so rapidly, that before the hands in our vessel, which had but one anchor out, could get another ready, she was drifting; and as we had but few men on board, and these very indifferent seamen, like a shot we passed the rest of the fleet, and nothing could stop our vessel till the cable was all run out: by good luck, the extreme end of the cable made itself fast in the hatchway, our windlass being broken into pieces. We then got a second anchor out, and secured the vessel.

During the time that the cable was running out, a stupid fellow of a soldier went to try and hold it, but in an instant he got all his fingers torn away.

The master of the vessel thought her in such danger that he wanted to run her into Flushing, thinking that it would be better we should surrender as prisoners, than risk the sand-banks. "Attempt to do so," said the officer commanding us, "and I'll order my men to cut away the masts, with hatchets, by the board, and then ride it out."

This soon quieted the master; and before night-fall the gale abated. I never was so much afraid at sea: the fright made me quite sick—all on account of the horrible sand-banks. Our doom was sealed, if we had drifted on them; and even the 42d could be no match for the terrible element that foamed to devour us.

Next day the fleet received orders to go round to the island of South Beveland, where we landed. The 42d then marched some six miles, to a small village, upon the

inhabitants of which we were quartered, as we had no tents to encamp in its neighbourhood.

I could not but admire these primitive people; they were kind and obliging to us, and in many things resembled the Lowlanders of Scotland: the same domestic intercourse, the same spirit of national pride and devotion, the same zeal for the institutions and religion of their fathers, distinguish both people.

The division of the army to which the 42d belonged had nothing to do here; our duty was light, and we had no drill. I should have liked this place exceedingly well, if it had been a healthy spot; but we were not here one week when the hospitals began to fill with the sick: I have seen us mustered on parade, all to appearance quite well, when suddenly, as if struck by some invisible power, one man would fall down in the ranks; then another; and a third, before we were dismissed. What could be more appalling than such a sight! You are

acquainted with the disease which afflicted the army at Walcheren, and therefore I will not enlarge on this portion of my narrative.

As soon as Flushing surrendered there arrived an order for the troops to leave the place; this was in July, 1809. The sick were embarked the first, on board of vessels by themselves: and of the 42d we had upwards of 300 sick in the course of four weeks. Those of the regiment who were in health, of which number I then was one, embarked along with the 9th regiment, on board of a line-of-battle ship. Every ship sailed as she got her quota of troops on board, there being no regulation. Our ship soon cast anchor in the Downs; yet were we a few days there before we could be landed; and we were not comfortable on board, on account of the sickness that had broken out amongst us after our embarkation.

But, again, we must submit to the hard destiny of etiquette, and orders from

London. This may be all very right, yea necessary; but then it makes men look so much like fools. At length, however, we were landed at Deal, and marched back for Canterbury.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE 42D AGAIN IN ENGLAND.

WE were not long in Canterbury till most of the regiment fell sick: our men were dying daily, and the best and the bravest knew not the hour he might be carried out a lifeless carcass. It is usual with the company to which any man belongs to bury him when he dies. So then it happened that one of our Light Bobs died, and we were paraded at the dead house to inter him. There were always three coffins in the dead house at once. The men went in, and there was shewn them a coffin which they were to lift away: they bore it along to the burying-ground; and just as they were letting it down into the grave, the lid of the coffin started off, and behold there was no dead man in it. The fact was,

they had taken the wrong coffin; and in the height of their affront they left the empty coffin in the grave and returned for a full one. In the dead-house they found their man in another coffin; and shouldering him along, he was buried with the accustomed honours.

We had no duty to perform here, as the regiment was so sickly; the few men who kept their health were consequently very well off. Of the company to which I belonged, there were but another man and myself that had escaped by this time the Walcheren fever. Many who had survived the race to Corunna were now gone to their long homes.

There was scarcely a man in our regiment who did not think the Walcheren expedition a very foolish thing. We were a fine army of men sent to an unhealthy climate to do nothing, except the few troops who were engaged at Flushing. We thought if we had been sent to Lord Wellington, he would have taken better care of us, and given us something to do when he found an

opportunity. This we would have preferred to lying in a bed of sickness for months together.

I have oftentimes heard the men say that they would rather have been landed on the Continent (when we were lying at anchor off the island of Beveland, and ready every morning to land), let the consequence be what it would; and we thought we might have marched to Antwerp, and not lost half so many men as we lost by disease. But this business is now forgotten by all but those who took part in the expedition. I may not, therefore, introduce sayings of individuals, or hearsays of companions.

I suppose we were eight months in Canterbury before I took the Walcheren trouble. I rather thought it was a country ague, as the people in that part of England are very subject to the ague. I had it every third day. I was never confined to my bed except the day I was afflicted.

The regiment being still very unhealthful, the Marquis of Huntley, our colonel, it was

said, petitioned to have us sent to Scotland: the request was granted.

The time I was in Canterbury I liked very much. I had nothing to do, for we had all the indulgence from our colonel that could be given.

CHAPTER XV.

EMBARK FOR SCOTLAND—STAY AT MUSSELBURGH.

THE route came, and we marched for Ramsgate, where we embarked on board of transports for Leith: there we landed, and marched for Musselburgh Barracks. We had a great many sick at this time. I was well, but not stout; but I was only a few days there when I was compelled to go into the hospital with the real Walcheren disease.

I wrote to my relations in G——, letting them know that the regiment had come to Scotland, and the poor state of health I was in. My father came to see me. He brought me some bottles of wine and some fine bark, which I mixed together, and used very freely. I have never had ague or Walcheren disease since.

I was truly glad to see my sire: I was not in a condition to be reproached for my folly; my service and sufferings had obliterated all my misconduct: the hardships I had gone through atoned for my error; the service I had seen claimed the respect due to one who had fought his country's battles.

I got a pass and went home to see my family and friends. I was received with much kindness by them all. I stopped one week in G——, and then I thought of going on to B——, to see my aunt and cousins; and at the same time, I judged the air of my native island would be of some service to me. I was there a week, and then returned to G——, where I made out my time, and again joined my regiment.

We were not long in Musselburgh when the regiment got very healthful, every man that liked having got liberty to go and see his friends.

I kept myself very reserved for a long time after we came to Scotland; but through the course of time, I got acquainted in Edinburgh, whither I went very often: but

it was like to prove my ruin at last. I went away from Musselburgh at night, and did not return till next morning. Musselburgh is about five miles from Edinburgh. On one occasion I was missed, reported, and confined. My sentence was to march round the barrack square in heavy marching order, from morning till night. There were a great many more in the same squad; and our period of punishment was eight days. On the second day of my march the colonel came to inspect us: he called me out from the squad, and sent me to my room; the rest were kept their time, and every night confined in the guard-house, while the sentence lasted.

It was not long after that, when I took another trip to Edinburgh, with two other men of the same room I belonged to. We were in a public-house drinking: the company was not good, you may be sure. A quarrel broke out, and the police were called in, and we were all to be taken to the police office. I tried to make my escape, by knocking down a police ser-

geant with a part of a chair that had been broken in the affray, but I was hit and taken by the rest of the police. The two men that were with me were Highlanders, and all the police were Highlanders; so, through the use of the Highland language, we all got away; and so much for clanship: then we treated the police officers very well with whiskey. This would have been a very serious piece of work, if we had been sent prisoners from the police office in Edinburgh to our regiment at Musselburgh. We got home before morning parade, and there was no more about it. But I did not visit Edinburgh for a long time afterwards.

However, when the orders came for us to hold ourselves in readiness to set off for England again, I thought of once more taking a trip to Edinburgh: I went away at night; this was what we called *running the mail* when we had no pass. At this time I staid away two days from the regiment; there was no man of the regiment with me. On leaving Edinburgh I was assailed by a thousand different notions, all urging me not

to return to the regiment; and I really believe I would have been base enough to desert, could I have got my clothes changed. I was sure there was no way of escaping, being so long absent; but I had no money in my pockets, and no broker would dare to exchange my clothes, I thought, if I proposed it to him: I fancied he might seize me, and deliver me up as a deserter. How I came to stay away two days I cannot tell; I believe I was mad at the time. But once in the open air, once past Arthur's Seat and Jock's Lodge barracks, I trudged on through Porto Bello till I reached Musselburgh, and walked into the barracks. There I was told that I had only been reported one day and one night absent, the sergeant being so good as to mark me present. The orders were to confine me as soon as I came back: the sergeant doubled his goodness by allowing me to clean myself, and go to the colonel personally; this was a lucky thought. On this day there was to be a general review, and it struck me at once that I would have some chance with the colonel. I found him

in his office; he gave me a great caution, and told me what the consequences would be if I was guilty any more; then he sent me to get ready for the review. I never returned to Edinburgh more while the regiment was in Scotland.

A few weeks after this affair we got the route for Gravesend, and this I thought happy news, for I could not stop away from Edinburgh; but Musselburgh was a very fine place for a soldier. Having been fourteen months in Musselburgh, we marched for Leith, and embarked on board of *smacks*, before an immense crowd of people.

We had a fine passage to Gravesend, where we landed, and marched to Chatham, and there we were billeted a few days. Then we got the route for Lewes barracks; here I kept myself from all company whatsoever, having received tidings of my father's death a short time after our arrival at that place.

There was nothing particular occurred at Lewes. We expected a visit from his present Majesty; he was at Brighton, and was

to come to review the 42d; the day was fixed, but it came on very wet, and after waiting some time for the Prince Regent we were disappointed.

I suppose we were eight months in Lewes, when orders came for us to be in readiness to embark for Portugal. At length the route arrived, and we marched for Portsmouth, and embarked on board of three frigates. Our strength at embarking was 900 men. Our Colonel, the Marquis of Huntley, came to see his regiment embark; we thought it was not decent of him to see us coming off a long day's march and go on board the boats without a halt. We expected to have seen plenty of bread and beer at the beach, when he was there; but the 42d wanted no bribe to embark, we were not belly-gods, that could not go where our king and our country called unless we had been crammed first.

We were a few days at Spithead before we sailed. Then we put to sea, with a fine fair wind, and had a very quick passage to the Tagus. We were three days in the

Tagus when we landed at Lisbon, and marched to camp at Aderick barracks, about one mile from Lisbon.

We remained here a few weeks before we got orders to join the army. The orders having come, we marched for Gafette, a small village where our 2d battalion was quartered. This place was five days' march from Lisbon. All the staff of the 2d battalion were sent home, and the men and officers were to join the 1st battalion. Our strength now was 1200 men. One of the finest regiments that were then in the country was the 42d. This was in the year 1812.

We joined the 1st division of the army, which was composed of a brigade of guards, a brigade of Germans, and a brigade of the line. To this last we belonged; and it was composed of the 24th, the 42d, the 58th, and the 79th regiments of the line. But there were none other but the *line* here.

The whole army was at this time in cantonments. But our regiment soon got orders to march to a walled town, two days'

march off. I cannot charge my memory with the name of this place. We were here only a few days, when orders came for us to return to our old cantonments.

At this time Lord Wellington was getting the army in readiness to advance upon Spain. There were no French in Portugal at this time. Accordingly the army took the road for Salamanca. We marched by divisions; and we had quarters every night, as we had no tents. All the army was the same, I believe.

CHAPTER XVI.

MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY UPON SALAMANCA.—SIEGE OF THAT PLACE, AND OPERATIONS WHICH PRECEDED THE BATTLE.

WE were about eight days in going to Salamanca. Here we fell in with the French army; they retreated from the town, leaving a garrison in it. There was a large convent that the French had fortified very strongly: the 4th division of the British army was sent to besiege this place. The rest of the army was ordered two miles above the town to ford the river. There was no crossing the bridge, as we had done under the command of Sir John Moore. Part of the guns on the convent commanded the bridge. The French army having retreated three or four leagues from Salamanca, Lord

Wellington did not pursue it. His conduct proved that he wanted the surrender of Salamanca first. Our first division bivouacked about a mile from the town. The division employed at the siege lost no time in getting their batteries ready. It was melancholy to view the destruction which had taken place in this fine town from the time I had been in it before. The French had thrown a great part of it into one heap of ruins. The fine convents and churches that I admired before, even in our misery to Corunna, I did not now know them again, the alteration was so great. Our bread did not come in regularly to us here, and we were served out with flour. I went one day to buy a loaf of bread, thinking I would have purchased it for the old price, fourpence, or a little more. But, to my surprise, I was asked six Spanish shillings, which come to about four shillings and sixpence, English money. This shews the distressed state of a country in which the seat of war is pitched by choice or necessity.

At this place I was made a corporal. I

think we were nearly two weeks here before the French troops who were in Salamanca surrendered; about the 27th or 28th of June.

The French army advanced within three miles of Salamanca, and formed their line of battle on a large plain; but whether it was to try and relieve their troops in the town, or to form an idea of the strength of the British army, I cannot say. In the greatest hurry we sallied from our encampment, thinking that the enemy was right on the top of us. Our division was not long ere it got within reach of shot of them. We were commanded by General Graham. The French army had a very fine line formed by the time we took up our position. Graham took up his position on a range of small hills, directly in front of the French, at about five hundred yards distance. By this time the artillery and piquets were engaged. We expected nothing else but to make an immediate attack upon the whole of the enemy's line. We had a great advantage of the French by our position. They had

two large villages in their front, which they occupied. I thought we might have given them a complete drubbing here; and every one thought the same, from Graham down to the private soldier. But I suppose my Lord Wellington's orders were *not to engage unless we were attacked.*

Graham was mad to get at them: it was said he went home in two days afterwards, because Wellington would not let him engage.

We stood under arms till dusk; then there were working parties sent out, to form as many half-moon breast-works as possible during the night. I was on this party. All night the French had very large fires blazing; and by their light we could see the enemy marching, and so we understood they took advantage of the darkness of night to give us the slip.

Graham was up a long time before day in the morning, and rode about the outposts. When day came in clear, he found the nest was gone, and exclaimed, "*I was sure of*

this." There was a brigade of cavalry on our right; Graham lost no time in sending them on the pursuit: we soon followed. In marching through those two villages that the enemy had occupied, we found them all deserted of the inhabitants. The houses were stripped of every article that was portable as plunder, or useful as fire-wood; and as we traversed the ground which the French had occupied as their position, it was covered with beds, bedding, and furniture of all descriptions; but the most of it went for fire-wood. This is always the way with villages and towns when two hostile armies encamp in their vicinity. And this shews what must have been the misery all over Spain, paced as it had been in every corner by hordes of military; and thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants ruined, perhaps, for ever.

We followed the French to the river Douro, where they made a stand. Salamanca surrendered the next day after we left it. And from this account, it appears

to me that Lord Wellington wanted this place to surrender before he would risk an engagement,—always cautious.

We bivouacked on the banks of the Douro, in woods; and as we had no quarters, we constructed huts for barracks. At this place I had my share of sixty-five dollars, come by in the following manner. There being a few houses at a little distance, my comrade and I went to get some water at them. There are draw-wells beside all houses in Spain. We had taken our canteens with us. We had to fix our canteens to straps, to let them down; the straps gave way, and down went the canteens. This was an accident that must be repaired at all risks. The well was not deep; my comrade went down, and in searching for the canteens, he found an old sort of a tea-pot, and in it the sum of money I have mentioned was very carefully deposited. But the coins were all different, and might be far more valuable to an antiquary. In this way the Spaniards hid their money; at other times

they dug a hole five or six feet deep in the house, and concealed it.

We were encamped on the Douro's banks about eight days, when the French army having received a great reinforcement, attempted and crossed the river. Lord Wellington thought it was most safe to fall back from this position: we fell back accordingly, two days march. The enemy took a direction to the right of us, and on the third day they established themselves in a fine position on a large plain: that same night Wellington brought up all his forces, and took up a position on a small height right in front of the enemy. We sat by our arms all that night: next morning we got under arms two hours before day. When it got a little clear, Wellington commenced forming his line of battle, to make an attack, I suppose. When the French general understood this, he wheeled his line back into columns of companies, and marched off to his left, trying to turn our right: Wellington then wheeled back in columns of companies, and

marched to his right;—both being in one direction. In this manner both armies continued their march for the most part of the day, without firing one shot. We were not a mile asunder, and often much closer the whole of this time.

This was as grand a sight as ever I saw. Two large hostile armies, amounting, I suppose, to 100,000 of all arms, in all the gorgeous display of war, traversing a country in parallel lines, so close, for so many hours. It was awful; it was a sight perhaps never again to be seen by any who saw it that day. Men gathered from every nook of Europe were here assembled,

"Pride in their port, defiance in their eye."

The most of the day's march was through vineyards, having no road.

Before night the enemy took a direction more to the left: Wellington then marched for Salamanca A little after sun-set we halted and bivouacked in grape-fields. Next morning we marched before day for Sala-

manca. We arrived there in the afternoon, when we learned that the enemy had taken up a strong position on the heights, about a league from Salamanca. We lost no time in fording the river Tormes. It was about an hour after sun-set before we got to the position assigned to our division this night. The piquets were engaged before sun-set.

Our division was formed in close column. The men sat by their arms all night. Would you see our bivouac? Behold us then on the bare sward, unable to lie down, from the most tremendous rain that ever drenched mortals—the livid lightning illumining the sky, and as it were playing over our arms; the thunder rolling from one corner of heaven to another. Our canteens are of wood, and they are tied with a strap round the knapsack. The canteen being right in the centre of the knapsack, and this being placed on the ground, makes a good seat, for there is nothing in the knapsack that will receive any damage by sitting on it. And in this manner I spent the night I

now allude to; and in like manner I have passed many a long night. But I have retrograded. We come again upon the ground; the bivouac.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BATTLE OF SALAMANCA.

NEXT morning we got under arms before day. This was the 28th of July. The sound of musketry announced an engagement: but the firing at this time was occasioned by the different divisions taking up their ground in position; and the piquets alone were engaged.

Our division marched from its nocturnal position and formed in rear of a small village to support the centre of the army. We were the reserve division, and were marched from one place to another till about two o'clock. Then we were marched to the left of the army, and took up a strong position on a range of small hills in front of the right of the enemy. At this time there was assembled on our position an immense artil-

lery, which kept up a tremendous and well-directed fire on the French. The infantry and cavalry were at the back of the heights I allude to.

The ground on the left of the 42d was greatly exposed to the fire of the enemy's artillery, on account of a large slope that was between two of the small hills. I belonged to the eighth company at this time. We moved and formed in rear of one of the hills before any loss was sustained. There was a regiment of German riflemen marched across this slope, at the time we had passed it, in columns of companies, going to support the right of the army. The French attempted, as each company passed, to make their shot tell; but there was only one company struck; the ball hit the officer that commanded the company and passed on to the right; they were marching left in front. I saw eight men levelled with the dust by that one shot—the like of it I never witnessed.

At this time the battle was raging with great fury; and there was no one could tell

which army was to be the conqueror, for both fought with obstinate valour. For about two hours, the roar of cannon and musketry was tremendous; and though we were not in the brunt of the action, we lost a few men, in killed and wounded. The right of the army suffered most; for there the action was hottest.

It was said, that the general who commanded our division, that was Major-Gen. Campbell, received orders from Wellington to bring the division into action at the time the battle was raging with such fury. We were to have dashed forward, they said, and formed in some large fields of wheat, in front of those heights, the enemy having a very strong line at the farther side of them.

The light companies of our brigade were sent out to skirmish on our new position; but it was long ere we were marched from the high ground. I think General Campbell took his own time to form the division on this new position, knowing that there would be a great deal of bloodshed, had he obeyed the orders sent him by Wellington. This is

what was said at the time in the division; and I report what I saw and what I heard from those who looked farther than I did perhaps. The truth is, General Campbell saw the victory was our's without this movement and sacrifice; it was then complete in his eyes; but it would have been a perfect annihilation of the enemy if our division had been pressed forward at the moment Wellington commanded us to move. We should then have had the brunt of the battle in its close, and the French would have been overthrown inevitably. At last, our brigade marched, and formed line in the wheat-fields, but did not advance, as the enemy's line had fallen back.

By this time the French army was all in confusion, making the best of its way from the field of battle; and now it was almost sun-set. But our division having received orders to pursue the retreating foe, we were marched off the wheat-fields; yet it was not marching, it was rather running. The day had been very hot; we were greatly fatigued. We could get no water to drink;

we had had little or nothing to eat. About dusk we got into a wood, and we were still on the trot. We continued in this manner till a little before daylight next morning, when we were halted, expecting, as the day dawned on us, to behold a great many of the enemy surrounded by our division; but, to our great surprise, we were a long way out of our course. General Campbell had a guide, but I could never learn whether he or the guide was in fault. The general in a few days more quitted the division, and went home to England, they said.

This was what the world called the battle of Salamanca.

The enemy retreated in two columns, one making for Madrid, the other for Burgos. We halted a few hours from sun-rise, then started again, taking a direction to our right, having gone altogether to our left during the night. In the course of two hours we came up with a regiment of German heavy cavalry, that had just been engaged with the French, and had taken about 500 prisoners. They broke into a square that the

enemy had formed to allow a safe retreat to the rest of their army. The slaughter had been great which the Germans made; for as we traversed the ground on which this affair had been achieved, the dead and wounded were beyond belief. In the course of an hour we got within sight of the French army; they were formed in line of battle, as if to make a stand, not thinking on the drubbing they had received the day before, and a fresh division going to attack them.

When we came within reach of shot, General Campbell began to form his line, and our six pieces of cannon were set to work. They had not fired two rounds when the enemy wheeled back into columns of companies, and made off at double quick time. We continued our march after them till it was near sun-set, when we halted, at a small village, where we bivouacked that night, being in great want of rest and refreshments. We were certain of sleeping unmolested, as the enemy reckoned themselves fortunate to escape from us. They left every thing they had in the field of

battle and near it, on their precipitate retreat. Their baggage, I suppose, was one day's march in rear of their army.

On this day there were horses, mules, asses, bullocks, sheep, and goats, all wandering through the fields in great numbers; all these the enemy had abandoned on their retreat: so our women, who were not provided with beasts to carry their lumber, were furnished now, if they had address enough to catch the horses and mules. My mess caught a sheep and killed it, and cooked it that night, being in great want of both meat and drink.

By this time the commissariat came up and supplied us with a little that night. Next morning we marched early, and got to a large town, where we halted and were cantoned, orders having come for our division to rest here a few days. I suppose Lord Wellington did not wish to pursue the enemy any further till he should arrange matters in the army, and give us a halt for some short space after so severe an engagement as the battle of Salamanca. I was

extremely happy at this rest, and so was every one else, as we had been greatly harassed for some days before.

We were only three days here when our brigade received orders to march and join part of the army that had gone to Madrid: it was the sixth division, I think. We were eight days on this march, and we had quarters every night: but when we had arrived within four leagues of Madrid, and just as we were on the line of march, orders came to us to return and join our old division again. The wing of the army to which it belonged was advancing upon Burgos. We joined our old division, but I have forgotten where and when; it must have been about the 10th of September, I think, that the army took the advance again.

In a few days we once more came up with the enemy, but they retreated as fast as we advanced. Our light-horse, however, overtook them at times. They did all that they could, on their retreat, to obstruct the advance of our line of march, by blowing up bridges and cutting down large trees on the

road. At one place they made a stand; but when our army was drawn up in front of them, and the piquets engaged, they made off again, before we got our line completely formed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SIEGE OF BURGOS.

In a few days we reached within one league of Burgos, where we halted and bivouacked: next morning we marched in two columns upon Burgos, one going to the left and the other to the right of the town. The right column was to take possession of the town; but that was done with ease: the left was to storm and take a horn-work on a height in front of the castle. This height was called Mount St. Michael. Our division was in the left column. We marched left in front for this place, the 42d being in front of the column; but the light companies of the brigade the first in advance. The enemy had piquets all round the height of St. Michael, on the summit of which the horn-work was constructed; and the advance

of light companies was sent to drive them into their works and keep them there. The light companies accordingly made their attack, and in a short time they had possession of the most part of the heights, but it was with the loss of men. The light company of the 42d lost twenty men in doing this. Our division was now halted right at the back of this height, and took up ground in different parts by brigades: we all knew then that we were to besiege the horn-work and castle of Burgos.

The enemy retreated from the horn-work, leaving, however, a strong detachment of men to garrison the works. It was on the 19th of September when we got here.

A few hours after we were halted orders came that the 42d was to storm and take the horn-work on Mount St. Michael; and we were to be supported by some companies of Portuguese troops: this was to be done at eight o'clock at night; but if I say from eight to eleven at night, I will keep to the fact.

Colonel Stirling, of the 42d, commanded

the brigade; Major Dick commanded the regiment: he issued orders for a number of volunteers for the forlorn hope; and the number was soon made up. On these occasions, one may as well go as risk the ballot, or have his ears stunned with a summons he dare not resist: however, I will say, volunteers were never wanting when the word came for them.

We were to make the attack in three divisions—a division to each flank, or demi-bastion, and one to the front of the horn-work: those divisions were to keep up a constant fire on the top of the walls, while the storming and fatigue party were placing the scaling ladders against the escarpe. Another party of the 79th attacked, I think, a redoubt on our right.

About an hour after dusk we got under arms and marched up to the height, and about ten o'clock we advanced till we were within one hundred yards of the works. The night was very dark; but we were soon perceived by the enemy; and in an instant all the works opened upon us a most tremen-

dous fire of round shot, shells, grape, and musketry. We did not fire any till the scaling ladders were placed against the wall: we were to commence by roll of drum, and stop by the same. The forlorn hope having mounted the ladders, found, to their great grief, that they were about two feet too short. We could not succeed: we could not (not that we would not) enter the ditch; and I believe the attack on the right demi-bastion was unsuccessful from the same cause. However, a narrow pass having been found out by some of the regiment, the place was carried at the point of the bayonet. The regiment then rushing into the works in numbers, the whole of the works were carried at the point of the bayonet, in the course of fifteen minutes. A few of the enemy made their escape into the castle: but the havoc was great that was made in and about the works.

The loss of the 42d was not, however, great this night, considering the very heavy fire that was kept up on us; and I think 150 was the amount in killed and wounded.

After the horn-work had been carried, the enemy kept up a constant heavy fire from the castle; and in about two hours after the place was taken we were ordered to march down to our camp ground, but two companies of the regiment to be left in the works. The Portuguese behaved manfully.

As soon as we reached our camp ground, there was an extra allowance of spirits given to each man for his night's work. The officer of the company to which I belonged was killed that night, and I was very sorry to see him in about half an hour afterwards stripped naked! He was a very fine young man. It was the Portuguese who did this.

Next day we were employed in getting every thing ready for besieging the castle: the making of fascines was the most of the employment we had. These things are made of brush-wood and filled with sand or earth: they are for making batteries, or for the defence and protection of working parties when breaking fresh ground; but the engineers had been busy.

On the 21st the works were again commenced. There were so many men sent from each regiment of the division for work, and so many for a covering party, in case of an attack from the enemy. The working party stood six hours to fatigue, the covering party had twelve hours of it: the covering party are in the trenches along with the working party.

It came to my turn of duty to be on the covering party this day, and we were greatly exposed to the fire from the castle, being only about 200 yards from it: the work, however, went on rapidly this day, and we soon got a little cover; but there were a great many men lost on the first day: covering parties are allowed to keep up a constant fire on the enemy whenever and wherever they can see any of them. But on this day we did not fire, as there was no cover for us.

There were a few of the company I belonged to collected together in one spot in the trench, as it is usual for men of the same corps and company to gather into a

knot when time permits to chat. We were all sitting on the ground: there were an officer of the company and a sergeant too. I was corporal. There were the matter of four or six privates, I think. A shell fell right in the midst of us: we all got up and ran, except one stupid body, who sat still, and the shell I may say between his feet; he took handfuls of earth, and tried to smother the fusee, not knowing what a fusee was; but in an instant he was blown to pieces. I threw myself flat down on the earth where I was, about four yards from the active shell: the rest of the men were eager to get as far from it as possible, before it would explode: they were desirous to lay down as far off as they could; but flight was unavailing. The officer was struck with two pieces of the shell, when it burst, on the head and the arm; the sergeant was struck with one piece on the head, which caused his death soon after: my musket was wrested out of my hand by another splinter, and broken into a hundred pieces.

The captain of the party sent me to assist the poor sergeant down to the hospital; and I was not displeased to go on this duty, as I wanted a musket: when I had delivered up the sergeant to the doctor, and procured another musket, I returned to my party, which was by this time moved down to the face of the hill under more cover.

There was no alternative in this: either the captain had to move his men out of the enemy's fire, or he would not have had a man to march back to the camp when our twelve hours were expired.

I think this was as foolish a piece of work as ever I saw Wellington encounter: to begin the siege of Burgos without shot and without a battering train. All we had were two eighteen pounders, and three howitzers (that had been taken from the French, I believe), a species of guns not adapted for a siege, on many accounts—mortars and guns mixed do well enough—one mortar and three guns, or one mortar and two guns. Such a place as Burgos would have required thirty eighteen pounders and eight mortars. To

give you an idea of our poverty of shot, I can assure you that, when the French were throwing their balls so plentifully away every day, there was an order issued that any one who could pick up a ball and bring it to the artillery should have ninepence. What a pity, when engineers can make wire bridges, we had not steel nets, to catch the shot of our foes!

The fact I have stated, proves that Colonels Burgoyne and Jones, commanding the attack on Burgos, were not provided for a siege of any description; but on it went by command of Wellington; and it was attended with a great deal of difficulty and immense loss, first and last.

The total loss was 24 officers and about 500 men killed; 68 officers and about 1500 men wounded and missing.

I must keep to my own observation, however. Well, then, in the course of five days from the time the shell amused us, I was up again at the works, on a covering party; but we had more shelter now. By

this time there was a three-gun battery silenced in the castle, that had been doing a great deal of mischief. This battery was on the first wall, and the horn-work we captured was about forty feet above it; so we had a fine opportunity of quieting it: but this was done by the fire of our small arms.

This day I was an eye-witness to a German rifleman silencing one gun himself, by killing three men that came at different times to sponge it. This clever marksman belonged to our brigade. There was a company of German riflemen attached to each brigade, I suppose: but the French marksmen were no less effective in picking out individuals among us.

On this day also we kept up a constant fire on the garrison, with small arms. We had a very fine cover by this time, as the work in the trenches went on very rapidly; and I passed my twelve hours with more contentment this day than on the former occasion. The working parties were from 400 to 600 men.

The day following there was a shot from the castle, that came through our company. I suppose the enemy had learned by this time that we were encamped right at the back of the hill: we had little huts erected here—a hut for each mess; my mess was sitting outside of the hut, taking some breakfast, and the shot, I allude to, struck directly in the centre of us, and went through the hut, bounding to the left of the regiment: there was no one hurt by it, except one man of my mess, that got his legs and thighs all filled with small stones, or rather gravel, which it forced out of the ground when it struck.

That same day we were moved out of the reach of their shot, and to better camp ground; and in about twelve days more our work went on so fast that we had our trenches almost close to the walls of the place: when we got this length, all the miners in the army were then set to work to undermine parts of the wall; but the miners by trade were slow workmen at military mining, as

they had no proper miner's implements: the men, however, went on with their galleries, till they came to the wall of the outer line of the enemy's defence; but it was accomplished with a great deal of difficulty. At length, on the night of the 29th of September, if I recollect rightly, this part of the wall was to be blown up: the storming party consisted of a part of the brigade of guards and part of a brigade of Germans; they were formed in the trenches for this duty.

As soon as the explosion took place, the enemy were all at their posts, and opened a very heavy fire on our works. The guards and Germans got out of the trenches under fire of all the garrison, and in an instant mounted and took the wall; but it was with a great loss. There was another explosion took place in a few days afterwards, much in the same manner.

The weather now became very wet, and the parties that would be up at the works all night came home in the morning in a

dreadful plight; the trenches were in such a state, with mud, you would hardly know the colour of the soldier when he came to the camp in the morning; he was all over clay. There was a run of water that flowed by the camp, and whenever the men were dismissed, they went to this water and stripped all off, and washed, musket and all. This is the state the besiegers are in when it is wet, broken, and bad weather.

By this time the battery was ready for our two eighteen pounders. It was said there were three with the army, but I never saw more than two in the battery; if a third existed among us, there it would have been without a doubt. It was with a great deal of difficulty that those two guns were got up to the battery; they were dragged up at night. There was a great many of our regiment at this work. We had a captain killed, and a great number of men killed and wounded.

A few days after the guns were mounted, I mounted a covering party in the morning.

There was an officer, no sergeant. I was corporal; and twenty men. We were stationed on the top of the wall where the first mine had been exploded. The enemy sent a great quantity of shells down amongst us on this day, and opened a heavy fire of round shot on our battery, which had opened a fire of red-hot shot on a large house they called a convent. It was near to the castle, and about fifty yards from that part of the wall on which I was stationed. Our guns kept up a constant fire all the day, but our hot shot had no effect on the convent: it was seen to smoke through the course of the day, but nothing else appeared; and I do not think they tried it again.

On the top of this wall, where I was stationed, the enemy had placed numberless boxes, like tea boxes, filled with earth. These formed a line of defence for the marksmen. There was just as much vacant space between every pair of boxes as would allow a musket to pass. From this wall, thus secured, the enemy wrought us a

deal of mischief before we took it: it was, therefore, all along, from the first, a great object to be in possession of this wall; but all the difficulty lay at the top of the hill where the castle was; and we made little or no impression on the inner wall, which was defended by a very strong pallisade and a ditch besides, I suppose. The wall we were masters of went round the base of the hill: it was, I think, twenty feet high. I am still speaking in reference to one day's duty I had on that wall.

The enemy made a sally after dusk out of the garrison, to endeavour to drive us from the wall. The officer of our party was absent at the time. I lost not a minute in getting my men planted in the most obvious places where the attack was meditated. On us the enemy advanced, but we kept up a very brisk fire on them, and they were forced to retreat back to the castle again with loss. Had we been on level ground with them, to use our bayonets, the few of my party who were wounded might have escaped in the melle.

The enemy could not have made a sally in a fitter time, as the relieving party was marching through the trenches at the moment we were hardest pressed, and my party was soon supported by an officer and thirty men of the brigade of Guards: but my party was kept two hours longer on the wall at this time, on account of the attack.

In besieging any place, the time of relieving the parties is changed every day, to deceive the enemy.

I think I was up just another time at the works, and on a covering party too; but there was nothing occurred worthy recording in my narrative.

We never got any nearer the castle than the second line, from which we were repulsed, or which our officers abandoned, from the impracticability of getting nearer the castle, after a siege of thirty-two days, and carried on with vast labour, difficulty, and loss. The 42d lost upwards of 200 excellent soldiers at this unfortunate siege; for it was Tom Thumb work, to undertake

the siege of such a place as Burgos with small arms, I may say: you might as well have sent the boys of the grammar school to take the Castle of Edinburgh with pop-guns and tow-balls; for what was the use of our two eighteen pounders, when the artillery were offering ninepence for every ball we could find? But Wellington must have had his own ideas of the place. There is no doubt but the place ought to be reduced before the army advanced: but what reason was there in advancing so far into the country at this season of the year, and Burgos an obstacle of the greatest consequence, and an army without a battering train of artillery?

The French army was greatly reinforced about three leagues from Burgos, and was making an attempt to advance: Lord Wellington then was forced to draw all his troops from Burgos, except a small detachment that was left to keep the works, which we had completed during the thirty-two days our men were employed; and

accordingly, on the morning of the 22d of October, I think, the siege was raised. We got up to the enemy in the course of the day: here we thought we should have had some chance with them, having none at Burgos.

The roads were miserably bad. The army was formed into three lines, on a very large common, or heath, expecting the enemy would begin the attack every minute. There was a thick wood between them and us, but I suppose they had not forgotten Salamanca.

Lord Wellington took up another position at night. We bivouacked here two nights. The weather was greatly broken; and the state of the British army was not good at this time. Our rations too were not served out regularly; some days we were without altogether; and soldiers are not priests, to make up by meditations the gnawing pains of fasting. Besides, the winter season was coming upon us with rapid strides. In fact, the British

army stood in a very critical situation. I know not whether an advance were impossible; but a retreat back to Portugal was practicable and perfectly safe.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RETREAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY FROM BURGOS.

THE baggage was accordingly sent on towards Portugal, as it were yesterday, and we followed it as it were this evening, after nightfall. In the course of the night we marched through the town of Burgos, leaving the castle almost in the same state as when we commenced the siege. We continued our march till day dawned upon us, when we were halted a few hours. We started again, and marched till it was evening, when we were halted and bivouacked in grass fields. Next morning again we started before day, and the retreat went on very rapid till we got to the banks of the Douro, where we halted a few days.

During this retreat from Burgos to the river Douro we had several affairs with the enemy, and many bridges were destroyed, to prevent them pursuing the British allied army. About 900 of the army, in officers and men, were killed, wounded, and taken prisoners.

The enemy came close up to us on the banks of the Douro, but did not attack the British, except near Tordesillas. A few shot were exchanged between the piquets. The weather now became very bad; the rains fell more copiously, and for a longer fall; and very long marches made it excessively fatiguing. Besides, we hardly ever had, on this retreat, a day's complete ration; and some days we wanted altogether. Beef, however, we scarcely ever stood in want of: that we might have wanted too, but it was marched alive with the army, and whenever we halted, a certain number of bullocks were killed for the brigade, by the butchers of the different regiments. When provisions were scanty, the men, in great crowds, attended at the killing of the

bullocks, with their camp kettles; and if ever you saw a butter-milk cart in Glasgow, it was the same here—a complete skirmish—shouldering, pushing, climbing one over another, and tongues going; aye, and fists too, sometimes,—for the bullock's blood. We cooked it, by boiling some of it, and eating it when cold, like cheese. We fried some of it, when we could get a little fat; but this was very rare—the joints of men, and horses, and bullocks, were too much moved in Spain for any animal oil to be gathered in the shape of fat—you would not scrape a pound of fat on the whole beast. When we could get a little oil, it served in the place of fat: and though some disliked this mess, I liked it well enough at that time. It was not the place, was not a retreat bivouac, to turn up one's nose at the blood of a bullock; and oil and garlic I could eat with any Spaniard in the country.

The bullocks were killed in the fields, for shambles were out of the question, and cut up on the ground; and by the time their

flesh was all served out in messes for the company, it was so full of sand and grass, that it was impossible to clean it; and when this was done at night, it was still worse. I have seen the men eating it, and picking the grass and dirt out of it, as they ground it between their teeth; and perhaps neither bread nor salt to it, and happy to get it. Salt was a rare article in Spain.

But all this, odious as it may appear to you, is easily accounted for, if you recollect that the poor soldier has little more than what he stands upright in, except his musket, during a campaign. Tables, chairs, benches, knives, forks, spoons, salts, mustard-pots, vinegar-cruets—where I wonder were they to be kept by men that did not know who their heirs were to be.

Tough as you may think it, I have been obliged to eat the ears of a bullock, or starve; and yet we were not so badly off for rations this campaign as we were in the following one.

After the army had got the few days rest

on the Douro's banks, the retreat again commenced, and we went on very rapidly till we arrived at Salamanca. Our division was quartered in two villages, a league from the city. This was the first quarters I had been in for more than two months, and no tents.—Tartars of India, and savages of America, were many times better off than the British army in Spain. We had no tents during this campaign. When we staid a short time at a place, we erected huts; when we were advancing or retreating, the cold clay ground was our bed, and the dews of heaven refreshed us. These villages were the same I spoke of before, as having been plundered by the French. The inhabitants had returned by the time we came back, but they were left destitute of many years' gathering, and perhaps never to get above it while they lived.

We were not an hour in our quarters, when a very heavy cannonade commenced, on the same ground on which the French had got such a drubbing on the 22d of July. This was General Hill's division, and a part

of Lord Wellington's army that had been left at Madrid. They had retreated too, and joined the main army here. The whole of the French force met here likewise. Hill took up Wellington's old position on the heights. The taking up of the position caused this cannonading. The bugle sounded, *turn out the whole*, and we marched to the heights, expecting nothing else but next day to be called a *second battle of Salamanca.*

At this time our division took up a position to the right of all the army, and formed in close columns that night. The weather was very wet, and we were in a very bad condition for fighting; but the enemy was as much exposed to the weather as we were. The French general did not wish to risk another battle with the heroes of Salamanca, and on the same ground; so by daylight he marched to his left, trying to turn Lord Wellington's right; but his lordship thought it most prudent to carry on his retreat towards the frontiers of Portugal.

We started as soon as the enemy moved; and in about an hour after the British army found itself in a very large wood, thickly planted with spacious oak trees. There was a sort of a road through this wood. You will form an idea of its size, when I tell you the whole day's march was continued through this wood.

The men eat plentifully of the bitter acorns all day; and I should think if these fruits were dried and ground to meal, it would make good bread and coffee. I was left behind with two men of our company that could not keep up with the regiment, poor fellows.

I had not been an hour with them till there were muskets firing at intervals through the wood. We thought it was some of the stragglers shooting pigs, as there were many herds of the grunting tribe kept in this wood, on account of the acorns on which the "swinish multitude" fed. But the shooting of the pigs proved to be the enemy firing at the stragglers. The French had taken another road, and had pushed on upon the

rear of our army. A few shots came flying about our ears; I then thought it was time for me to run: but my two wearied soldiers could not follow; and the question was, simply, shall I also become a prisoner? No.—'Twill be a voluntary surrender. I crossed the road, and made into the wood, thinking I would have a better chance if the enemy offered to pursue, or even to fire. I had hardly dived into the wood, when I saw on the opposite side six of the enemy jumping out of the wood, and crossing the road to the two men I had left. I was then sure they would not follow me till they had plundered their prize. They fired a few wanton shots after me; but, thanks to the thickness of the wood, and a fine cover, I soon got out of their view. It was not through cowardice that I did not return their fire: I would have exchanged a few rounds with them, but I should thereby have endangered the two Highlanders who were now prisoners, scarcely able to crawl, overcome by fatigue, without shoes, and their feet all cut and sore. Little did those

barbarians get from their two poor prisoners, They had neither money, nor food, nor kit, to enrich the savages who attacked them. We had five of the company taken that day from the same casualty. Thus, you see, for the matter of two guineas, a nation loses fifty, reckoning each man worth about ten pounds. War and economy dwell not together.

That same day, the general who commanded the division, Lord Paget, was taken prisoner in this wood. As for myself, I lost no time in making the best of my way through the wood. Before I got up to the division, it had been halted, and the men were taking up their camp ground for the night. I guessed from what I had seen in the wood how it would be. We were not long dismissed till the enemy's advance came up with us and commenced a cannonade. Two shots struck the tree our company was bivouacked beneath; for we were glad of the friendly presence of a tree, though the day had been very wet. Our horse artillery soon attacked the enemy;

Hill's division was at them too in an instant, and we drove them back through the wood. as they had followed us.

We kept up large fires, by which we sat all night on our old travelling cushion, the knapsack, upon the wooden canteen. It was so wet, was the ground, a pig could not have lain down comfortably: and we had nothing to eat all day but acorns. But about midnight every man was served out with a quarter of a pound of biscuit, and an allowance of rum. This, you will say, was a poor allowance for men that had been out day and night; so it was, but small fish are better than none.

Next morning we started before daylight; but the road was so exceedingly bad, that it was with great difficulty the army could wade through it. The 42d was standing two full hours in one part of a field up to the mid-leg in mud, before it came to our turn to move off. And this day's march was fatiguing beyond all description: when I think of it, I still seem to feel my feet and legs benumbed, cold, and stiff, my clothes

wet and disagreeable, my kit a load for a camel, and my musket fit only to be moved on a carriage. But how could I feel otherwise? For two nights before I had no rest, on account of the wetness of the ground. But never shall I this day's march forget, as long as memory holds her place.—Oh! no. It was during this day's march that I saw two men thrown off the sick waggon! I went aside to look at them, if they were British, but I could not tell, as they were almost stripped naked; they were not dead quite; one of them moved his hand, and seemed to implore my aid,—I could render him none. This cruelty to poor sick men made me shudder. My heart fills when I write such things. I think the surgeon, whoever he was, who had charge of that waggon, was to blame for this piece of barbarity. I have often seen, where the French were on the retreat, men belonging to their army laying on the sides of the road in this manner, but dead. I never witnessed any of the British army before this day's march, except where it was absolutely im-

possible to render them any assistance, left to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven a prey, to be devoured ere death came to their relief.

We continued our march this day till dark. We were halted in a muir that night. We had a small allowance of a quarter of a pound of flour, and our allowance of rum, each man. The flour was intended to line the coats of our stomachs, not to powder our shaggy locks.

Next morning we started again before day. The early bird catcheth the worm. We marched all day, and got into quarters at night: and the enemy having given up the pursuit the day before, we got leave to rest contented that night, having great need of some hours' repose.

Next day, the 18th of November, the army was to take the route for its different quarters in Portugal. That same day we passed Ciudad Rodrigo. There the head-quarters were established. The 42d marched to a small village called Carnecaze, where we were to halt a few days to recruit: and

we were all extremely happy when we got this length, after a long and severe retreat, but not quite so disastrous as Sir John Moore's to Corunna.

CHAPTER XX.

WINTER QUARTERS IN PORTUGAL, 1812—13.

I MOUNTED guard in this village of Carnecaze, and was placed with six men outside of the town, if I may so style this place. We were not to be relieved till two o'clock the next day. I sent my report into town next morning, with one of my men. The commanding officer, Dick, was out riding next morning, and he came the way of my guard. The sentry called, "*Guard turn out;*" but we did not hear him, being in a back house. He called a second time, then I turned out the men; but unluckily for us, who had been so fatigued by so long and harassing a retreat, there was one of my men fast asleep, and I had a great deal ado to get him out at all; and, when he did turn out, lo! and behold! he was dressed in a

pair of trowsers, instead of a kilt; and what was worse, he appeared like a drunken man, but he was only drowsy. I know not that any of us, since going upon this duty, had had any thing to eat or drink either. The man was not drunk; I had my eyes and my senses as well as Dick. I knew the habits of the men much better. There was no merit in this; if there had been a gill of liquor amongst us I must have known it, even as fowls of a feather flock together. The man I had dispatched with the guard report was absent two hours. I sent him, it is true, and expected he would soon return; but I could not leave my post to go and look after him. Dick gave me a great deal of abusive language; telling me, among other speeches, he would have me tried by a drum-head court martial, and broke for not being alert on my post, and for having my guard improperly drest.

I was in fault in this respect, as kilts, not trowsers, were our dress in all seasons; but for being *not alert*, I told him I had always been alert when there was more need for it,

and I could not turn out sooner than I heard the sentry call. He returned back into the village, and in half an hour the sergeant-major came with another corporal, and brought me prisoner to the drum-head court martial that was then assembled. There was dispatch enough here, God knows. I was tried on the above charges; and the man that was absent two hours was brought in prisoner, and tried also. A great many more prisoners were tried on this day, for "there's a time for every thing," for misconduct on the retreat. The regiment was turned out as soon as the court martial was over, and the prisoners were all brought to the parade. There were one sergeant and two corporals of us broken, and all the privates flogged. I did not much mind being reduced to a private, as I was fit for all duties a soldier could be called to; but I regretted the loss of the extra pay.

We staid here three days, and then took our march for Ceia. We were three days in going to Ceia. Here we took up our winter quarters. Ceia is a fine large town,

at the foot of a range of mountains. There were so many men sent to each house: We had no beds; the floor of the house was the bed of the poor soldier: each man had a blanket. We rolled down on the floor, and usually lay by fours, if there were four in a house. We had always straw to lay on, when we could get it, and the cavalry needed it not; here we could get none.

We left the 1st division at this time, and joined the 6th division. The 91st had arrived from England. So the 91st, 79th, and 42d were to compose one brigade in this division, and to be called the Highland brigade. The 6th division was composed of three brigades, two British and one Portuguese brigade, commanded by General Packenham. Colonel Stirling of the 42d commanded the Highland brigade. We were all happy enough in Ceia; having our rations very regular, and a cover above our heads, and very little duty, which made us quite content, after a long and hard campaign.

But we were not a month in quarters

when a malignant fever broke out in the 42d, and the men were dropping away very fast. We had funerals every day for a long time. More than half of the regiment was in the hospital, and the fever was still increasing. The general surgeon then gave orders that the 42d should leave Ceia, except one company to be left to do duty; and the rest of the regiment was to be sent to different villages around, a company in each, or two in large ones. The company I belonged to was sent up to a village in the mountains. This village was called Aldadezera.

I had good quarters here, plenty of clean straw to lay on, and the inhabitants were very kind to us. I had my pottage and oil every morning from my landlady. Sometimes I had a mess of calevances and pork: the calevances are a sort of beans; in fact, beans and bacon, after which a prince might lick his lips. I was very happy here, for I had my health remarkably well. All our non-commissioned officers were in the hospital except the pay-sergeant and one cor-

poral, so I was obliged to do corporal's duty but receive no pay. I was about to be made corporal here, but the adjutant put a stop to it. I could never learn his reason for opposing my humble promotion; for except with the Walcheren complaint, I had never been sick and off duty. The adjutant did not like to encourage a man the major had got broke.

The corporal fit for duty at this village was called M'Morran. He became acquainted with a young woman, a respectable man's daughter, in Aldadezera. M'Morran was very fluent in their language. He has told me that this young woman had a great regard for him, and she was to have gone along with him when we marched from Aldadezera. He never wanted, he said also, for any thing that was in her father's house. He likewise told me that he never could go out a walking with this young woman, but Dickenson, the officer who commanded the company, was sure to be after him, and to watch them wherever they went. Every thing that M'Morran did was a fault

in his officer's eye. Nay, he even threatened M'Morran with his vengeance. Dickenson would also stop the young woman when he met her alone, and would have discoursed with her for some time.

The women in Portugal were very free with the British; but I often thought they made free on account of our language, to hear us speak, and to see us Highlanders with our short petticoats.

At this time the regiment was getting new clothing. M'Morran and a man of the company were sent down the mountain to head quarters, to inquire if the company's clothing was ready, and bring part with them. They had staid rather long, having gone to take a glass of wine. They returned to Aldadezera just at the moment the company was on parade. Dickenson then threatened M'Morran in presence of the company, to have him sent prisoner to head quarters, and *broke;* for with some in the army the accusation and judgment are—*broke —flogged;* pleasant enough words to all but a soldier; but he added *broke* and *flogged,*

and ordered M'Morran in to dress and come out to parade. But why go to dress and parade if he was to be afterwards *sent a prisoner to head quarters, to be broke and flogged?*

Our parade was always in heavy marching order. As soon as M'Morran went into his quarters, he loaded his musket and put a new flint in her, before he began to dress himself: the company in the mean time had been dismissed. Dickenson, however, traversed the parade ground, waiting for M'Morran; out came M'Morran to him. When a soldier goes to speak to an officer, with his musket in his hand, he comes to the recover, the next motion to the present to fire. Dickenson and M'Morran stood together for about ten minutes, but no one of us knew what passed between them. M'Morran stood about two yards from Dickenson, and he was heard to say (by the men who were at a little distance loitering on the ground), "*You shall never have it in your power to do that,*" and in an instant he brought his musket to the present to fire,

and the shot went through Dickenson's left breast: he fell on the spot, and never spoke! M'Morran then threw away his musket, and called out, "*Take me prisoner, I am willing to die for what I have done.*" The whole village was in an uproar in a minute; the inhabitants crying and wringing their hands, and making doleful lamentation.

M'Morran was taken prisoner to the guard house. I was acting corporal of the guard: we mounted a corporal and three men. As soon as he got himself undressed, the sergeant of the company and my guard went down to head quarters with him. We were met by the surgeon and adjutant; the adjutant began to abuse M'Morran, who told the other *not to use abusive language to him, for he was now a prisoner; and he was happy for what he had done, and willing he was to die for the same.* The adjutant still abused him. M'Morran then told the other that there were men in the regiment watching to do the same to him! With that the adjutant left us. He had been a bit of a tyrant before, but became a very good officer

after this speech. A word to the wise is sufficient for them.

M'Morran was confined in the provost's guard at Ceia; it being head-quarters for the division. His crime then went to Lord Wellington, who ordered a general court martial to assemble at Ceia. It was eight days before the court assembled: M'Morran was then tried, and condemned to die in ten days afterwards.

We then wanted an officer to take charge of our company, as before this affair there was no other one in it but Dickenson. The commanding officer could not get an officer to take the company. They pronounced us mutinous; a good excuse for the fault of one man. At last an old man, whom we called the farmer, took heart to command us. He always made very free with the men; but he took the company on condition that it should be removed from Aldadezera. We were accordingly sent to another village, where there were two companies; one of which replaced us in Aldadezera.

I went to see M'Morran two different

times while he was under sentence of death. He was very penitent, and willing to die; but always said he was not sorry for what he had done. The young woman had liberty to see him once while he was under sentence of death: but I never heard what passed between them.

The day appointed for M'Morran's execution came, and all the division paraded about two miles from Ceia, at a wood. The gallows was erected on a high tree, at the end of the wood. He was brought in a cart to the place of execution; and the sentence of his court martial was read aloud by General Packenham. He received his sentence with great courage; but I think there was a part of the sentence omitted, and not read to M'Morran. The chaplain of the troops attended, and went through religious duties with him: he prayed for some time after the chaplain left him. Before he went up he addressed the troops, and bade them all take warning by his fate. The provost sergeant then went to his duty,

and in an instant M'Morran was launched into eternity.

What I am going to relate now was not read in the court martial. About ten minutes after he had been thrown off, the provost sergeant fired a shot through M'Morran's body.—Poor M'Morran!—He was then tied upon the tree. When we left this place he was still on the tree. A few nights after the execution, there were some persons tried to cut down the tree, but they were scared by some military piquet passing: they had it cut half through. It was thought it was some of his friends in the regiment who attempted this. From this time till we left the place, a guard watched his bones! M'Morran was a man very well liked in the regiment, and so was Dickenson our officer; and they were both Irishmen.

Our regiment having got stout again after the sickness, in about a month from the time to which the execution of M'Morran belongs, the division was moved four leagues further on towards Spain.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1813.—BATTLE OF VITTORIA.

THIS year the army was greatly reinforced, both in infantry and cavalry; and Lord Wellington having got us in a very fine condition for the advance, we were all provided with tents, three for each company. There were besides a very large battering train and pontoon bridges. I will not stay to describe either of these, but proceed with our advance.

Early in June, I think, we commenced our march in two divisions, which deceived the enemy greatly. I often thought it was a fine plan of Lord Wellington this. Our division composed part of the army that went to the north of Spain. We had immense difficulty in marching this road, for the country was very mountainous, and in

some places we were compelled to halt and cut roads for the guns. And we were only eight days on the march when the rations began to grow scarce; and for twelve days we had not, on any one day, a complete day's ration. We always had our beef. I do think we wanted seven days' ration out of that twelve: this was a very small allowance, was five days' full rations in twelve, for men that were out day and night, and marching from daylight in the morning till near sunset in the evening. But with all the obstacles we had to encounter, the advance went on very rapidly.

When our bread and rum came to the camp it was midnight, so that we lost part of our night's rest by this; and the bread we did get was but about a quarter of a pound of biscuit. Sometimes we got half a pound of soft bread, and some days nothing at all. These small morsels, whenever they came, were devoured; but our beef was cooked on the camp ground, wherever it might be, as we had usually a day's beef beforehand. The circumstance I have just explained will

account for what I now declare. During these twelve days of our march, I eat my beef without either bread or salt. Indeed the latter was not to be had in this part of the country; and if our pockets had been full of money, we could not get a morsel of bread to buy. I was at a great loss for tobacco on this march. Language cannot paint the fatigue and hunger we endured. I have seen my comrade and myself going to the fields of wheat, pulling the ears of the wheat, rubbing them between our hands, and then we took two stones and ground the grain, till we got it as small as possible. Then we made it into a sort of pottage, and supped it without salt or any thing else, and thought it very delicious.

The crowds that assembled about the killing of the bullocks were immense. A bullock's liver at this time sold at four shillings, and this was a perquisite the butchers enjoyed. Every thing that could be eaten was carefully cooked.

Lord Hill's division and two other divisions were two days' march in front of our

division. When we got within two leagues of Vittoria we were halted, having marched four leagues that day. We were not long halted when we heard a heavy cannonading, but it did not last long. We then got under arms, and marched another league. Here we received intelligence that the enemy had got a good beating, and was retreating in great confusion, leaving every thing behind them. We encamped here that night, and marched next morning for Vittoria. As we passed through the ground on which the battle had been fought, it was dreadful to see it. The road and the fields round about the town were covered with guns of every description, ammunition waggons, and baggage. We marched past Vittoria two miles, and encamped in a fine grass field. There was a field adjacent to this covered with the enemy's baggage. Our Highlanders were not long till they got in amongst it. I got a superfine blue coat, and a pair of trowsers the same, both new, and about four pounds of tobacco, and six or eight pounds of good flour: this I thought as much of

as if it had been gold dust, as I had nothing to eat for two days before. I would have made a further search, but there happened to be some cavalry left in charge of this wreck of the enemy's baggage; and the dragoons being about at this time, we were obliged to fly and leave the grand prize. Some of the 42d got lots of money, and some got articles of silver manufacture, and others got boxes of jewels and clothing of every description, plenty of flour, tobacco, and fine French brandy. Our camp ground was flowing in every thing this night. It was a night of cooking and feasting, and we soon forgot our late hardships.

Our division was halted here three days; and during this time we were employed in dragging the guns and military stores to a large field close on Vittoria.

Then came orders for our division to go in search of 5000 of the enemy, that had taken a road of their own choosing through the mountains. Accordingly we took our march at mid-day. We were marched all that day and night, and part of the next

day; but we had a halt of a few hours during that time. We then halted all night, and marched next morning a few leagues further; but the general having got notice that the enemy had taken the road for Pampeluna, we then retraced our steps to Vittoria, marching on the same road by which the enemy had retreated. We marched two days this way, and then halted a few days.

I now disposed of the blue coat and trowsers, to an inhabitant, for six dollars; being in great want of some money at that time. We never received our arrears of pay in Spain, except a few dollars once in six months.

We remained in this position three days, and then marched for Vittoria. I suppose, that at this time Lord Wellington did not know how to dispose of the army to the best advantage, for he was marching and countermarching our division so often, we were harassed out of all endurance. Next morning we quitted Vittoria again, and took our march through the mountains, the same road that we went in pursuit of the 5000

Frenchmen. At this time, we continued our march very rapidly till we reached Pampeluna, where the enemy had left a very strong garrison. Pampeluna is a large walled town with strong fortifications, built on a level piece of ground at the foot of the Pyrenees, and there is no height near it to command it in case of an attack.

We took up our position in front of the town; next day the division was set to work, to make an entrenched camp, with redoubts, round Pampeluna. We were at work here eight days; then we got orders to march into the Pyrenees. We were relieved by the Spanish army, who took possession of the works we had raised, and blockaded the town, though it was not regularly besieged.

We marched for the mountain Alpedebiscay, which General Hill's division had left; he had gone to guard the pass above Mayo. We were three days in going to this mountain: it was a remarkably high mountain. We had some very wet weather. The roads were very bad. When we

got to the top of the mountain there was a mist on it, that prevented us seeing more than a few yards, and it continued so for three days. While we were on this mountain, in this plight, we often said one to another, "We are sent up here to die of hunger;"—"No, they have forgotten where they sent us."

During these three days, we had not a bit of ration but one half pound of flour; and on the fourth day we were to march four leagues further without a morsel. This was very trying. It now strikes me with surprise how we were able to endure such hardships. I could hardly have believed the tale I have told, if I had not been an actor in it, and gone through all the parts. We understood afterwards that it was on account of the badness of the roads through the mountains that provisions could not be forwarded to us; and when we wanted in this manner, we never had our rations made up, or pay allowed us, for our loss. Some persons pocketed what was the poor soldiers' due. I suppose I wanted, at the lowest computation, thirty

days' rations during the time of my campaigns in Spain, and I never once got a day's back ration, nor a farthing of allowance for my loss: but if the ration of one man one day was worth one shilling in bread, meat, and rum, the commissariat owes me thirty shillings for my campaigns alone; and reckoning that 30,000 men were in the same state with myself, there's a pretty penny for you! £30,000 and 30,000 ten shillings—£45,000 fleeced from the "poor but honest soldier."

Whether the returns of the commissariat were made out in full, or deficient according to the days we wanted, I know not. In the former case, both the army and the country lost; in the latter, besides professions of gratitude to the "gallant army of Spain," this country owes that army £45,000 for rations; and how much for walking days and weeks barefoot, and sleeping night after night on the cold ground, wet like rats? Ah! I have no thought to waste on such miseries. To the mountain of Alpedebiscay.

We moved three or four leagues to the left of Hill's division. We were here only a few days. Our rations were still very scarce. The enemy made an attack on Lord Hill's division in a thick fog, and drove him from his position above Mayo, with great loss. Hill was obliged to retreat till he was supported by the third and sixth divisions and part of the Spanish army. Wellington thought he was lost at this time. The enemy advanced very rapidly for Pampeluna. Our division got notice of this about mid-day, and in an instant we were all under arms, and marched all that day and night and next day, till about twelve o'clock, when we pounced upon our prey.

The French were forcing the pass into Pampeluna, only two leagues from it; but Hill's division was defending it with great gallantry, on the right of the pass. At this moment we turned round a hill, about a hundred yards from the pass, and in two minutes we were in sight of a strong corps of the enemy, 6000, marching directly for Pampeluna. We were only about two hun-

dred yards from them when we turned round the hill, and in an instant their whole line of march was stopped. I think I see them now. It was the most beautiful movement I ever saw; romance tells nothing more bewitching.

The light companies of the Highland and other British brigades were sent out to skirmish till we got our line formed. The light companies of the division drove this immense column of men back with a few rounds. Part of the division now fired; I never saw any thing caught in better time, and so completely done as this. The enemy were hard engaged with Hill at this time; and we never had a better view of an engagement. We did not advance for some time; and we were standing in line for about two hours, while Hill was beating them from his position. Both armies fought with obstinate valour, and I never saw the French fight half so well as here. I was an eye-witness to see them charge a hill that was occupied by a brigade of British, and which repulsed them at the point of the bayonet. The

French tried it a second time, and a third time; but were in each attack repulsed with great loss. You would have thought the French were mad or drunk, to attempt such a job as this. This is the first day of the battle of the Pyrenees.

This strong column that was making for Pampeluna fell back to the rear of a small village about five hundred yards from the ground our division occupied in line.

General Hill having driven the whole of the enemy from his position on the top of the mountains, they then assembled in large columns round the village. It was then thought they were going to make another attempt upon the pass. The Highland brigade was then ordered to advance two hundred yards, where we took up a position on the right and left of the pass, and had a very fine cover by a wall of earth that enclosed the fields in which we were posted. I could foresee that we should have some hot work here with the division, and that our brigade especially would get well peppered, as we should be the first to make the

attack. We had part of the other British brigade and the Portuguese brigade to support us, if the attack were made; but Lord Wellington, wishing to spare his army, and the French, perhaps, judging that they had lost enough of men that day, the attempt was not made by either party, though the skirmishers kept up a constant fire of small arms till dark.

We were at a great loss for artillery; all our guns were left behind, not being able to come through the mountains so fast as we did. The enemy had a few small guns; I suppose about three pounders, which they carried on mules.

The loss of the 42d this day was trifling, being only about forty in killed and wounded.

When it got dark we were ordered to pile our arms and take off our knapsacks, but not to take out our blankets, and to remain with our accoutrements on all night. We had no fire, as the men were not permitted to leave their post to look for wood. We had no rations of bread and meat, but we

received a ration of rum at night; that is, a quart amongst six men.

I was so much fatigued, after being under arms all day, and marching all night before and part of the day before, and part of this day, that I laid myself down on the ground, with my knapsack beneath my head and my bare knees on the earth. It was a bare stubble field we were in: the kilt is short, and protects not the knees. I got three or four hours sleep very comfortably; but in an instant I was started out of my sleep, and the alarm was so great, you would have thought the whole of the enemy's force were on the top of us. Every man seized the first musket he could get hold of, and some of them began to fire away as fast as they could load, though there was no object to fire at.

This alarm was created by a mule that had broke loose, and wandering in among the piles of arms, made such noise as to frighten us. The most of the army being asleep at the time, and some of the men starting up and crying out, "The enemy!—

the enemy!" caused all the confusion and panic; but every man was at his post in an instant. In a short time we were fully satisfied that there was no enemy to attack us.

Part of the Spanish army was on a hill in rear of us, rather to the right. They fired a few shots on us, and wounded two men in the company next to our's. The French army must have been alarmed likewise, though they did not fire. We rested very little after this till we were under arms two hours before day, and remained so till sunrise.

Both armies wishing to repose themselves this day, there was not the sound of a musket to be heard. In the course of the day Lord Wellington inspected the different positions of his army; and the French and we were great friends this day. There was a field of potatoes right in front of the 42d, and we were both in it, French and Highlanders, digging for the potatoes. What would the people of England have said, if

they had seen us so friendly, and the day before with bayonet to bayonet?

Some of these brave Frenchmen parted with their bread to us; a circumstance which shews how partial the French and British soldiers were to each other in a day of peace. The Spanish and Portuguese soldiery would not have risked themselves in the field with the French, who hated the one and despised the other. I had an opportunity, when in this field of potatoes, of seeing the face of the hill that had been so often charged on by the courageous French the day before, and so often repulsed by the brigade of General Hill's division.

It was truly shocking to see so many dead bodies; and I declare to you, on my word, there were almost two French for one British soldier. The havoc was immense, and it was mostly bayonet work. They were men of excellent bottom, were the French, who lay in heaps, and still in death, on this brae face.

In the course of this day of respite, our

artillery came up, but did not appear in sight of the enemy; at night, however, our guns were drawn up to the position we occupied: in fact, there was now a brigade of guns on each side of the pass, one of them being on the right of the 42d regiment.

This night was employed in making covers for the guns, to save the artillery-men from the enemy's small shot. Next morning we were under arms a long time before day. When it got a little clear, that we could see the enemy's column, our artillery opened a heavy fire of round and spherical shot, at about five hundred yards distance. The French then commenced a very brisk fire on our brigade and artillery. We had a fine cover, and lost but few men. We did not fire, as our skirmishers and piquets were in front, keeping up a constant fire upon the enemy. Our artillery kept up a well-directed fire, for about an hour, on the enemy's column, when they began to break off, and retreat through the mountains.

General Hill was at this time making an

attack on their left, which put them in great confusion at the pass.

I have often since thought, as I then did, if our division had advanced and attacked the village on the pass, at the same time that General Hill made the attack, we would have taken an immense number of prisoners. We would have lost a great many brave men in doing this, but the victory would have been complete. Could it not have been done when the enemy commenced their retreat, an hour before the village was evacuated? Our piquets and light companies drove them out of the village when there was but a small number in it; and General Hill had attacked them on the mountain. Why not then have attacked them at the same time at the pass, when their retreat had commenced? But I suppose Lord Wellington's orders were obeyed.

Our general of division, Packenham, was wounded the day before, and the command fell to General Pack, a very forward and

bold officer; one of those who says, "*Come*, my lads, and do this," and who goes *before* you to put his hand to the work.

As soon as the village was entered by our light companies, the advance of the division commenced with the 42d. The enemy had the streets of the village strongly barricadoed, with all the wood and stones they could collect. At the moment we were cannonading this village, I saw Soult and all his staff retreat out of it at great speed. Our artillery sent a few spherical shot amongst them. Some of these broke among them, but they all continued their retreat at the gallop except two, whose horses were struck. We advanced very rapidly for a few hours, and there were a great many prisoners taken, being cut off from the retreating army in going through the mountains.

Lord Wellington passed us a short time after we had taken the advance, the first time I had seen him this day. It was reported in the army that his anxiety was so

great at this period of the campaign, that he wanted sleep for several nights, and that he had not even time to shave himself. I recollect that his beard was very long when he passed us.

We continued our march till sun-down, and encamped that night. Next morning we started again, and marched all day, and encamped that night. The retreat of the enemy went on very rapidly, till they got into their own country: but the poor inhabitants of the Pyrenees suffered very much on this retreat of the French, who stripped their houses of all that was in them. When we passed through some of those lonely villages, there were no persons to be seen, save a few old people; and the fields around were covered with their bedding and furniture of every description, half burned.

We were badly off for rations at this time for a few days, but we could not expect it otherwise, as every thing was sent a few leagues to the rear, and kept there till the conquest of the Pyrenees. Wel-

lington himself did not see any thing belonging to him for several days, except his horse, his sword, and telescope.

Next day we were again in possession of the Pyrenees. Our division took up General Hill's old position above Mayo. All the men that had been killed at the forcing of Hill's division from this position, were still above ground, and the mountain eagles and wolves devouring them.

Our orders were very strict when we took up this position, in case the enemy should make a second attempt on it. All the time we were on the Pyrenees, we were not allowed to lay down one night without being fully accoutred, and we were under arms every morning an hour or two before day. No man durst leave his regiment's camp ground except on duty; and the duty was very hard, as we had very strong piquets out day and night. At first our rations were very scanty; some days none at all, other days half rations: but after every thing was arranged, we got our allowance pretty regularly. The apples were very

plentiful, and now ripe in the valleys, so we would steal away from the camp ground, pull as many as filled our haversacks, come home and boil them. This mess, as an occasional meal, might have done well, but eating them as we did proved very injurious, for a great many men became unwell, from eating so much of this food.

When we had enjoyed a few days' rest, working parties were sent out daily, to construct redoubts, trenches, and breastworks, on the mountains, till they were made very defensible.

A few days after we came here I was made corporal again: at the same time there was a volunteer offer came for the men who had served their seven years, and a bounty of ten guineas, to be paid in gold, to each volunteer, for seven years more service. This was a very tempting offer, and most of the men who had served their time took the gold: a great many of them would not have taken it, if they had been in England; but they said, "Why need we want money to-day, when perhaps to-morrow we

may be engaged, and never have the pleasure of seeing home more?" I dare say I would have taken the bounty at this time, but my heart was fairly turned against a soldier's life, and I had still the prospect of seeing home, for my chance would be as good to-morrow as it had been yesterday.

About a month after we had been on the mountains of the Pyrenees, there came on one of the heaviest falls of hail that I ever witnessed. There was no man could stay outside the tent, and some of the tents were torn to pieces. The horses and mules, poor beasts, broke loose from the trees to which they were tied, and ran off: some of them were never seen again. This shower lasted for about an hour. Some of the pieces of hail measured six inches round. The weather was very wet for some time after this; then it became finely warm for about three weeks.

About this time the Highland brigade took up a position very close to the enemy, a division of them having still a part of the

Pyrenees in their possession, and they had raised very strong works on that part. I suppose it was to defend a pretty large town that was at the base of the mountain which they held: but all the rest of their force had taken up a strong position on the Lower Pyrenees, and raised very strong works on them.

We had very disagreeable weather after this; very cold and wet. The inhabitants of this district armed themselves, and would have paraded on the summits of the mountains in strong companies. We frequently mistook them for the French. One day a large body of them made their appearance on a mountain adjacent to our brigade. The general ordered the light company of the 42d out after them, to see who they were. They fired a few shots upon the company, at going up the mountain, and then retreated: when the company got to the top, they could see none of them; they had all gone down to the valley. None of the company was hurt. It was thought these mountain-

eers had armed themselves against foraging parties of either army, as they were greatly harassed by them.

One night I was out on an outpost piquet, in this bad weather, with an officer, sergeant, and twenty men: it was very wet and cold, and we had no cover. In the course of the night I was going round with the relief, upon a narrow footpath, on which we had double sentries. The enemy had the same, about fifty yards from our's. On coming to the spot where I expected to find my sentry, or rather I should say where my sentry ought to have challenged me, I was surprised not to hear the cry of "Who goes there?" I halted my men, for I was sure there was something wrong; but as soon as we stopped, we heard a great buz of jovial voices in an under tone. It was dark as murk. I advanced alone, to ascertain the cause, and lo! I found my two Highland sentries and the two French sentries, with a third fellow of the enemy, all sitting on the ground with a keg of brandy, over which they were making merry: it

instantly occurred to me that this was a trick to fill our men drunk and surprise us by that mountainous footpath. The French soldiers got up to run, on my approach, but I stopped them. As soon as they were halted, the fellow with the keg got it up to my mouth: I took a good draught of it. They had put a piece of cane into the bung-hole, and in this manner they were helping themselves. Nothing but the intense cold and wet could have induced this, but it was very acceptable. The moment I had taken enough to do me good, I then sent the French piquets to their post, charging them not to attempt the same again, or they should be made prisoners. I would have made them prisoners at the time, but what would the consequence have been to my own men? I then would have had to report them, and the crime was death.

One of my sentries was so drunk, that I had enough to do to get him to the piquet guard: I then concealed him amongst the bushes. I should have said that after I

released the French sentries I planted my own sentries, with strict orders not to allow any person coming from the enemy's outposts to come within reach of their musket, whether he pretended to be a deserter or a friend.

Sentries on outposts ought to be very cautious, as, by stratagems, less favourable than the keg of brandy, all our piquet might have been put to the sword; and the enemy let in upon the Highland brigade, when they were all asleep. What would the consequence have been? Perhaps the loss of the whole brigade. I will by and by relate to you the particulars of a job of this kind that was done to the enemy at Bayonne. But every thing in its place.

I have often caught sentries asleep, on going my rounds with the relief, but never on outposts. Sentries, when they find themselves likely to be overcome by sleep, as it has been very often my own case in Spain, after much fatigue of marching for a day and a night, with hardly any sleep, ought always to keep moving about, and

never sit down at night, or rest against any thing; but prick themselves with pins, as I have done often, and wash their eyes with their own water. There is nothing either disgusting or unpleasant in this: I have done it often, and found it the best antidote against drowsiness. Any thing, every thing, should a soldier do to do his duty: and as we were constantly getting draughts of young soldiers, when I was corporal, I made a point of it to teach my sentries to do as I had done, to keep awake till they knew more of their duty, and could find out a better way of doing it. But young soldiers were very rarely placed on outposts: they are mostly careless, and have no experience of duty, and are liable to be startled where there is nothing to scare them.

Though our duty was hard on the Pyrenees, I was extremely happy, as I had my health remarkably well, and very often got an extra ration. I was reckoned the most able corporal in the company, for drawing our rations, and regulating the duty of the men: I was, therefore, em-

ployed generally in drawing the rations for the company; and I took care always to return the full complement of men. Usually my return conveyed one more than the exact number; but the company was never full to the war establishment; and if I did return a man more than the company's strength, this did not hurt the company: it came from the quarter-master, who was allowed more for the company than the actual strength of the regiment. It was a mere question of necessity, shall the quarter-master or corporal have this ration? The corporal, to be sure; the quarter-master draws for as many as he pleases. I was found out at times by the quarter-master, but I contrived to clear myself by men joining and going to the rear every other day; and on the whole, he accounted me honest, active, and dutiful. God knows, I was all that, and the confession I now make cannot be considered the confession of a base deed. If I was not really allowed an extra ration for all this trouble and bustling,

and anxiety, I deserved it, for my pains and standing up for the men's rights, and the equitable distribution of their duty, without any favour, or hope of reward.

CHAPTER XXII.

ENTRANCE INTO FRANCE.

THE town of Pampeluna having surrendered, and the garrison of San Sebastian having been taken by storm, the British army was then put in order for entering France. Lord Wellington then issued very strict orders that, when we entered France, we were to observe the greatest regularity and good conduct on the line of march, and in quarters. The day, at length, was appointed for our entrance into France: the 8th of November, I think, was the memorable day.

Our division at this time was commanded by General Clinton, the Highland brigade by General Pack, old Stirling having gone home to England on leave of absence. The position that our division now occupied on the Pyrenees, was to be taken up by the

Spanish army on our leaving the ground. The reason of this was, that the position the enemy had in front of our's was not to be attacked, but left in rear, while we attacked the Lower Pyrenees. By an easy movement, the enemy would be between our division and the Spanish army; and 'twas odd if the latter allowed them again to scamper into Spain.

Whenever it got dark, we moved down off the lofty mountains; but it was with a great deal of difficulty, as the night was excessively dark. About three hours before day, we were formed in close column, in fields of the enemy's country, and when day dawned, we found ourselves about two miles from the enemy's position, on the Lower Pyrenees. We were served out with half a ration of rum before action. The attack commenced with the left of the British army, by daylight. In the course of half an hour, the enemy's shot and shells were flying amongst us. Our artillery were not up with us this day. The enemy had very strong columns of men formed on the summit of their position, in

front of our division; and their breastworks and redoubts crowded with soldiery. They opened upon us a very heavy fire, from their breastworks and redoubts, of small shot, as soon as we came within reach. Whenever our division got to the foot of the Lower Pyrenees, we then advanced, with three cheers, up the hill, in the face of the enemy, pouring upon us the most tremendous and continued fire of small arms. Up we went, and the column on the top of the hill gave way, and retreated. The men in the breastworks, however, kept their ground, and peppered us most famously. The fire was destructive, for the fellows were active in priming and loading. And one of their half moon breastworks stood it out till the other British brigade drove them from it at the point of the bayonet.

There was a vast difficulty in getting up this hill, as the enemy had rendered it almost impassable, though it was naturally so from bushes; but leave Highlandmen to hill work. The enemy having retreated to the left of their position, where there were two very

strong redoubts, which I thought they meant to defend to the last extremity; we pursued, and so complete was the plan of attack by the British, on all the different positions of the French, at one and the same moment, that they were all carried in the course of a few hours.

The Highland brigade was ordered to take the two redoubts on the left of the position. As soon as we advanced on the first, the enemy fled from it. Between the two redoubts, there was the space of half a mile, it might be, occupied by the finest built huts that I ever saw. You might have lived in them winter and summer without wet or cold. The enemy set them all on fire, and prevented us, by the conflagration, from advancing for a short time.

The 42d was ordered to take the next redoubt. We were formed into columns of companies, and the companies formed four deep. In this manner we were to attack it. We were also provided with scaling ladders, as the walls were high. We advanced through the burning wreck of the huts, and

when we came to the redoubt, to our great surprise, it had been evacuated: the enemy were flying from it, in great haste and confusion. The right wing of our regiment followed, and the left took possession of the redoubt. The guns in the redoubt were all loaded, and not one of them spiked.

Thus, in one day, the British army not only entered France, but gained a complete victory over the enemy in their own territory.

I must notice the Spanish army, that had been left on our position, on the higher Pyrenees. As soon as day appeared that morning, the French in front of them were struck with amazement, to see blue and grey-coats on sentry, instead of red ones. In an instant the Spanish posts were attacked, and driven in: then the whole position was attacked, and soon taken by the enemy; part of whom drove the Spaniards down to Mayo. All the baggage and sick of our division had been left in Mayo; the soldiers who were in charge of it were assembled, by British officers, to assist the

Spaniards. But the enemy desisted, as by this time they learned what had been going on in their rear, among the lower Pyrenees. They retreated very briskly, and soon witnessed the fate of their army. If they had not done so, in a few hours more we would have had them all prisoners. The Spanish army pursued them, and took the French town at the back of their position, where they staid all night; and to have revenge for what the French had done in their country, they burned part of the town. I saw it in flames from our position that night. The Portuguese soldiers in our division acted in the same manner, burning houses wherever they could get at them, in revenge for what the French had done in Portugal. Often have I heard the Portuguese threaten this, if ever they got into France.

The inhabitants in this district, which we now occupied, were taken by surprise, and fled from their homes, leaving all behind them. The country was well peopled; the cottages and houses numerous. Indeed, all along the country looked like a large village,

laid out in detached houses; and what must have been the alarm of the peaceable inhabitants, to find themselves in a few hours in the presence of so many men, of so many nations; all enemies to them, and thousands thirsting for revenge! Flight alone could save them, but their all was a prey to strangers.

We advanced about a league, and bivouacked that night. We had no tents. We rested little. When night came on, thousands were in search of booty, throughout the deserted houses, and carried away to their camp ground whatever they liked. The whole night the camp ground was flowing with wine and brandy, honey, hams, bacon, bread, young pigs, and fine fat sheep, and indeed every thing that could be carried away. My authority as corporal was no more regarded by my squad, than the breath of the south wind. This was France; the army had suffered enough on account of the French, and the men had had no rations all day, except a little rum in the morning; and no man knew when his rations would arrive.

It was in this strain the fellows argued, and robbed, and eat, and drank: and, moreover, it was hard to fight so good a battle, and beat the enemy too in his own country, and not have pot luck with him. But always, after a battle, when all is in confusion and turmoil, that night is a time of good living; and sometimes I have seen it so on the march, but not often. It was a hard day's work, and a dangerous one; but we had ample gratification at night.

Next morning we got under arms before day, but did not leave our camp ground till noon. The general was exceedingly angry at what had been done the first night we entered France, and issued very strict orders next day; and the commanding officers planted sentries all round their respective regiments, to keep the men in the camp; and the roll of companies was called every hour, night and day.

We left this ground, and marched about two leagues, and encamped in fields. The enemy retreated very rapidly, till they reached the river Adour, which runs by

Bayonne; here they made a stand. Our men this night made another attempt on the inhabitants' houses. Next day there was a complaint lodged against the Highland brigade, who unfortunately could be easily recognised by their dress; whereas, the other troops of our infantry corps were not so distinguishable. We were all turned out, and our tents searched in our absence. The men had suspected what was in the wind, when the bugle sounded, and they contrived to remove every thing out of the way: so there was no one found out.

We staid here two days; the weather was very disagreeable at this time, being both wet and cold: but arrangements were making to place the troops in cantonments. Our brigade marched a few leagues, and we were cantoned in a fine large village, called Austerazes, on the banks of the Adour. On one side was the enemy, on the other, the 6th division of the British army. Our sentries were close to one another; and those of the enemy as thickly planted in our very teeth. There were so many men quartered

on each house in the village; and we thought our quarters exceedingly good, having been so long in camp, and much of that time very wet weather.

We had very strong piquets out here, on the banks of the Adour. Lord Wellington lost no time in getting up the pontoon bridges, and preparing them for the crossing of the river. I think we were here about ten days, when the army was put in readiness for another attack. General Hill was two leagues above our division, on the banks of the Adour. He was to make the attack on that part of the enemy's force which was opposed to him, while the 6th division were crossing, by the pontoons, at Usteriza, to get in between the enemy and Bayonne. They would then be between Hill's division and our's.

We were under arms all night, and about two hours before day the pontoons were on the river. Our light company was sent over first, to drive in some small piquets of the enemy, in front of the 42d. Our regiment then followed our light company over the

pontoons. We effected this in style, and then marched about four miles to the main road for Bayonne. The greater part of our way lay through woods, composed of short brushwood. As the people in France burn wood mostly, they cultivate it as fuel; and, hence, when a wood is ripe, as it were, it is cut down, and for some years it is brushwood, rising again, to become fuel fit for cutting. We had a great deal of difficulty in making our way through this copse, and every man was allowed to choose his own path.

When we got within a mile of the road, the enemy was approaching at double quick time, making for Bayonne. The 42d, and the light companies of the brigade, and a few companies of Portuguese riflemen, got up to the enemy before they crossed us. Highlandmen do not reckon it lucky to let certain things cross their path in the morning. In a short time the 91st joined us. General Pack formed us in line, and sent the light companies and riflemen in front to skirmish; but would not venture to engage

otherwise, as the enemy was very strong. We stood in this position till they all passed us, every man lamenting that the rest of the division had not come up; as we should then have made a great many prisoners, or given them a good drubbing. Our light company lost a number of men, and its officers were all killed. Their bold courage led them on so far, that the enemy could direct upon them the most murderous fire. The Portuguese riflemen were dreadfully cut to pieces. The enemy had not passed us a quarter of an hour, when the advance of Hill's division came up. Now, what would have been the consequence to the enemy, if all our division had been up? Pack, I suppose, would have risked an engagement with the two regiments he had up, the 42d and 91st, but it was impossible to get us formed in line any closer to the enemy, without wheeling us back by companies, and marching us by files through a piece of very bad ground; and this might have caused the entire destruction of the 42d and 91st, before we could have formed in line again. This was

my idea of the brave General Pack's not attacking them. Who was to blame for this, I cannot tell; but I think the other British brigade, and Portuguese brigade of the 6th division, and the 79th of our brigade, must have lost their way in coming through the woods. I have often thought Hill made the attack too soon, as the great difficulty of the ground our 6th division had to traverse, must have been known to our general officers, and more time allowed us to rally on the skirts of the main road, after we had every man, as he could, fought his way through the brushwood. It is all over now, but at the time I felt as much disappointment, in having worked so hard, with my companions, to get at the enemy, as I ever felt any loss. Every body was vexed around me. We were smack in the Frenchmen's teeth, and if we had but 500 more men, the whole of their strong columns would have been ours. Hill's and the 6th division now pursued the enemy till they were within a few leagues of Bayonne, where they made a stand, to cover the place. We bivouacked

that night close upon their camp, having no tents: all our tents and luggage were at Usteriza.

Next day, about noon, our division received orders to return to its quarters, at Usteriza, and Hill was to keep the position. The enemy having learned that the 6th division had fallen back upon Usteriza, they then fancied they had a fine opportunity of giving Hill a drubbing; but the night before the attack was made, there were a few French deserters came in, who gave notice of the attack that was purposed to be made the next morning before daylight.

Our division received orders, about eleven o'clock that night, to march to support General Hill's division. We accordingly marched all night, and were up, to the support of Hill's division, by nine o'clock in the morning; but Hill had driven them back, with great loss, by this time; and the appearance of the 6th division encouraged them to fight like lions. The enemy, therefore, roughly handled, thought proper to make the best of their way for Bayonne.

We were in the action, it is true, but all the praise was due to Hill's division. The 42d marched past a brigade of Portuguese artillery during the action, and I think I never saw men so eager as they were, in the sponging and firing off their cannon. You would have thought they had a hundred dollars a shot, for this hot work. I suppose there had been a charge made on this piece of ground, as it was strewed thick with the wounded, and dead, and dying, of both armies. French, and English, and Portuguese, lay friendly enough now. At a little distance from the same spot, we passed through a field on which the French had thrown away their arms, muskets, and cartridge boxes. The field was positively covered with them. Fools that they were—what is a soldier without his musket? he throws away the half of himself when he dashes his firelock to the ground. The gallant 92d Highlanders charged a hill two different times this morning, and took it, but with great loss.

The enemy having got under their works,

at Bayonne, General Hill left this position, and went a long way to the right. Our division kept possession of the position the engagement had been fought on. We encamped a few nights here, The 42d were encamped on the identical hill on which the brave 92d had charged so heroically. We were then quartered in the houses all around this position. The inhabitants had fled from them into Bayonne. The company I belonged to, and another company, were in one house all that winter; but we had very strong piquets in front of the enemy, and erected batteries and breastworks on our position.

One night I was on piquet here, and was going round with the relief, and in going to plant a sentry next to the Portuguese brigade, their first sentry was on a little height, rather to the rear of our's; the Portuguese sentry challenged, and instantly fired, thinking we were a party of French. The sound of his voice, and the report of his musket, came as it were one upon one ear, and the other on the other ear, before you

could have said Jack Robinson. As bad luck would have it, the bullet struck, and went through, one of the legs of one of my relief, which was afterwards amputated. This would not have happened, if our general officers had observed to order the out-post sentinels to be planted in line. Whose fault the mistake was, I know not. The Portuguese sentinel did right.

A few days after this incident, the other British brigade of our division wanted to take a post, that the enemy had about 100 men of a piquet on. There were two grenadier companies of that brigade, and a few volunteers, to make the attempt. The plan was this: the whole of the party, after night-fall, advanced to our advanced sentries, and stopped there till midnight. Then there were two strong and trusty fellows sent out, as deserters, to the French advanced sentry, who took them as such. But they soon got an opportunity of laying hold of the sentry, and throttled him like a rabbit. Then the party advanced in double quick time, and surrounded the piquet house, and took

the whole of the enemy prisoners, without shedding a drop of blood. The French officer had his lady with him, and they were at supper at the time; a late hour indeed! The French and British outposts used to be very good friends before this night, but this cruel job annihilated all feeling of honour, and we were denounced savages. The taking of this piquet, and the barbarous murder of the unfortunate sentinel, added nothing to the success of the war, while it covered its authors with disgrace.

We were sometimes badly off for our rations in this position; but the enemy had plenty, and before the murder of their companion, sold us large quantities of bread and brandy at night. One day I was on piquet here, and was sent with six men into a wood. One of my company came with our dinner-mess into the wood; but he no sooner found himself out of sight of his regiment, than he made off for the enemy's lines. The villain, however, feasted with the enemy's sentry before he got farther. I was glad he was gone, though I lost my

day's allowance. He was a good-for-nothing rascal; constantly shamming ill, and bothering the non-commissioned officers of the company. Your dirty, lazy, careless, lying, bullies, never do good to themselves, or their comrades. We received the same fellow among the prisoners returned, and he tried to persuade us he had not deserted. There were several others of his kidney, all vagabonds, who were pardoned, on account of the regiment's good conduct. Such fellows ought never to come again among faithful, brave men. They are an eyesore to the good soldier. The strength of a regiment does not depend on a 1000, or 900 men, but on their heart.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WAR IN FRANCE, 1814.

IN the month of February, we all got in readiness for the advance. I think about the 17th we moved on, and pursued the enemy for many a weary league, oftentimes very badly off for rations. On the 26th, we came up to Orthes, where the French were in position. Our division marched all that night, to a ford below Orthes. Lord Wellington passed all his army through the river by daylight, and attacked the enemy in his own position. The ground on which the French were formed, was a fine range of small heights, in rear one of another. As soon as our division came up with the enemy, we formed line with a rapidity that would have astonished folks who talk blusteringly about the celerity of French movements in the field. By George, I never

saw them move one step quicker than ourselves in any thing but to run away, and there, I grant you, they always beat us.

Our light companies were at them in an instant. It was always quite enough to say to us, "Come, my lads, there they are!" Our line of battle was formed in rear of a hill. The enemy's shot and shells were flying amongst us very hot at this time; and we lay down, to save ourselves, till we could see the moment to start at them with the bayonet. Our grenadier company formed in a large gap, that was on the top of the height, in front of the 42d; and our light company was in a road cut out of the hill, rather to the other side of it. A squadron of the enemy's cavalry made a charge up this road; our light company was in a sore mess here, making the best of their way, on their hands and knees, up the sides of the road, the dragoons cutting and slashing away at them, as if they had been cabbages. Many of the men were badly wounded; and one man received thirteen cuts, on different parts, some very ugly. The cry was, from

all quarters, "A charge of cavalry!" and, in an instant, all were under arms. To the great surprise of these cavalry gentlemen, they had no sooner got up to the height's top, than they beheld us all in line. They now wheeled their horses round, and tried to retreat, and a few of them did escape; but every man, as he passed our grenadiers, was either shot dead or wounded, till there was no passing the road for dead horses and men. Lord Wellington came up, in a few minutes, to the gap that our grenadiers were defending, and had a full view of the enemy's line. He looked all anxiety; but how rapid must have been his judgment? he was in the gap, as it were—he was gone; and off to the left he dashed, as hard as his charger could lay legs to the ground.

Our division then received orders to advance; but, as we advanced, the enemy retreated from one hill to another, and would not stand. We had a very fatiguing day's march after them, running the most of the time; and the hussar brigade of cavalry along with us. The 42d at last came up to

a village, where part of the enemy made a stand: the rest of the brigade were behind. Our general, Pack, was with us. We halted a few minutes to take breath. Pack then gave orders for us to charge the village, and be covered by two squadrons of the hussars. Pack's brigade-major rode in front of the regiment, when on the charge, but he was killed, from a window, by a recreant shot, on entering the village. He was adjutant of the 42d at the same time. All the French in the village, according to custom, threw away their firelocks and knapsacks, and scampered off. We captured, however, above 300 prisoners in the houses. We had a great many killed and wounded on the charge; but there was not a man of us, who escaped harm, that had not a French knapsack or two in his left hand, and his musket in the right hand. As soon as we got fairly through the village, to our great surprise, we were met by about 2000 of the enemy, who had not thrown away their firelocks, drawn up in column,

We thought they were more numerous than they actually were, being deceived by their position. So we halted, and commenced a very brisk fire on them, thinking the brigade would soon come up, and relieve us and the hussars of the prisoners. The French had the advantage of choosing their position, but we had a fine cover of a dyke, on the road side; and they soon broke off, and retreated as fast as possible. All that we wanted, at this time, was the other two regiments of the brigade and the rest of the hussars, and deuce a one of the light-footed gentlemen should have taken French leave of us. The men of the 42d all wanted to attack these 2000 French; though, I dare say, there were not 600 men in the 42d. This piece of voluntary courage arose from the sight of an eagle and three stand of colours, which the French column had, and which we saw as plainly as I see my pen. Oh! if we had got liberty that day, what work we should have had! but Pack feared the loss of the whole regiment; and it would have been a

terrible thing for the 42d to be taken or beaten. So the Frenchmen all got clean off before any support came up to us.

We then commenced searching the knapsacks we had dragged with us through the village, expecting some booty. I sat down in high glee to rummage the knapsack I had picked up; it felt heavy, and I concluded it was filled with some valuables, either from the cupboards of individuals, or the shrines of the saints. I unbuckled it; and, lo! 150 rounds of ammunition tumbled out! an old shirt, and a pair of trowsers. "Here's a cargo for you," said my neighbour, as he emptied the knapsack he had picked up, "shot, shot, nothing but shot;" and so on the cry went. I don't wonder that the poor fellows threw away their knapsacks, when they hurled their muskets to the devil.

In about half an hour after the enemy's column fled, General Hill's division came in upon the right of us. He pursued them briskly, as his division had not been engaged. He had crossed the river above Orthes, and had taken a course away to the right. Our

6th division marched above a league further, and we bivouacked that night, after a very fatiguing day's work, in marching and fighting; but we had not a morsel of any thing to eat.

Next morning we took our march by day dawn; and tame enough the lions of Orthes were this morning. The day was very wet, but onward we moved till it was night; and in darkness we pitched our tents, and received and eat half a pound of soft bread a man, and drank our ration of spirits.

We did not start the next day till about ten o'clock, when we marched about two leagues, and encamped in a wood. We were not half an hour in our camp, when a very brisk fire commenced about two miles from us, at a large town on the face of a hill. We could see it all very plainly. This was General Hill's division, that had attacked the enemy, in order to get the town for quarters. The French contested it hard, and disputed every footstep they gave way, not wishing to lose their quarters. But Hill's men would have it, and the enemy

saw it was vain to contend with them longer than one hour.

This was a fast day again, but it was very seldom my mess wanted; we had two men belonging to it, the equal to them was not to be found in the regiment, for foraging. I have seen the rogues go out of a night, and bring home hams, fowls, bread, wine, brandy, and other good things. The houses in this part of the country were numerous, and well stored in all manner of eatables. I gave those two fellows a great deal of liberty, what very few non-commissioned officers would have done; for it was risking myself, as well as them, but I could depend on them.

We were in this wood a few days, and the weather was constantly wet. We were then put into quarters; I had very excellent quarters. Our brigade was quartered on country houses. My mess had plenty of flour and wine. We made pottage in the morning, of the flour, and supped it with the wine; and then we had our rations very

regularly. We were here a week. I should tell you, that our rations were supplied pretty punctually, when we halted any length of time in one place.

We left this good spot, and advanced very rapidly, though the army was miserably off for shoes. You would not have found one good pair among a company. Hundreds of the men were obliged to pad the hoof; others, as they could get round the butchers at night, would place their feet on the raw warm hides of the bullocks, and cut out as much as made sandals, which they strapped round their ancles. If the day's march was wet, and the next day's dry, woe betide the sandal trampers; their buskins got so hard, they could not move till they soaked them in water of some kind or other. All the shoes that the cavalry had were taken from them, on this march, and given to the foot soldiers. I got a pair of these, but for three days before that, there was the poor corporal bare-footed as Adam, except that I always kept the upper-leathers on my feet for

decency. And you cannot think what a comfort it was when two comrades had a shoe apiece. It helps one on wonderfully, to have one shoe that he can change from one foot to the other, when he gets sore or cut in the soles of his feet.

The march went on very rapidly, till we got within a few miles of Toulouse. All the inhabitants, from within four miles of that city, left their houses and fled into town. The whole of the 42d were quartered in one large mansion, the castle of a nobleman. Judge how magnificent it was to admit us all. We found here every thing we could desire. The cellars were filled with wine; in all about fifty pipes. Our camp kettles were full from morning till night, except when we were cooking our beef. We were here about a week.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BATTLE OF TOULOUSE.

Lord Wellington having got the army in readiness again, and the pontoons prepared for laying on the Garonne, we received orders, on the 5th of April, to march that night at eleven o'clock, so we bade adieu to the remainder of the fifty pipes of wine, and by daylight next morning we were arrived at the pontoon bridge; but it was not finished. This bridge was throwing over about three leagues below Toulouse. None of the enemy appeared to oppose the operations of the bridge party, as the plan of throwing it across so far below the city must have deceived them; and General Hill was left in front of the town, at the bridge which the French occupied. Hill remained there during all our operations,

and even while the battle was fought: his presence detained a very strong force to defend the bridge.

In the course of two hours the bridge was thrown over upwards of twenty boats broad. The rifle brigade, and part of the cavalry, with a few guns of flying artillery, crossed first; then the sixth division. We marched about a league, the day being very wet. The most of us got into quarters that night; the rest were in camp. The next day we moved close upon Toulouse, where we took up our camp ground in fields. All the houses near us had been deserted: the inhabitants had all fled into the city.

On the night of the ninth our orders came to march; three hours before day we were under arms.

I had charge of the left-hand tent of the company. Eighteen men of us struck the tent that morning merrily; and little did we think there would not be one to pitch it at night. Our regiment's strength in marching from this camp was about 550, rank and file; all good soldiers as ever belonged to

the 42d—the most self-conceited regiment in the army—a regiment that thought and said there was no regiment under the crown like them—men that would not take a word, when drinking in tap-rooms, from any soldier, but in an instant up and box him—men that reckoned it their pride to conquer or die—and this was the day that was to try them.

After daylight we were halted: the third division had by this time begun the bloody fight about Toulouse, driving in the enemy's piquets; but the strong position that they had was about a mile from the town, and almost surrounded by canals. When we halted, the general of brigade called all the officers, and told them that he had received orders for the Highland brigade to attack the enemy's breast-works and redoubts, on the right, saying, at the same time, "The gallant 42d will lead and attack, and be supported by the 79th and the 91st."

We were then formed into square, and told by our commanding officer what we had to do. The division then moved, and in the course of half an hour we were right

under the enemy's position; a canal on one side of us, and the enemy on the other.

We marched in columns of companies past their position, till we had fairly got beyond their works: but it was not a march; we were running all the time; and the enemy had opened upon us a tremendous fire; still we went on undauntedly, although our men fell in heaps, resolved, when we got up to the French, to shew them British play.

As soon as we had run past their works, we were halted, and in the course of a very few minutes there were two very strong columns of the enemy's infantry and one of cavalry appeared on the height in front of the Highland brigade. At this time the canal was about 100 yards in rear of us, and the enemy about 300 yards in front; so, what would the consequence have been, if we did not both fight and conquer on this position? In an instant the enemy's columns marched down upon us, cheering and beating their drums, as if they had been going to scare crows from a corn-field, by

their shouts and the hammering of sheepskins. Their officers too were in front of their men, waving their swords, and swaggering like showmen at a fair. I dare say they thought we would surrender without resistance, or that they would easily thrash us, and drive us into the canal.

We were busy forming line, and they took advantage of this to pour in upon us a brisk fire of musketry. As soon, however, as our line was formed, and it was complete, in a thought, we gave them a volley, and advanced with three cheers to meet the foe, keeping up a very brisk fire on them.

The 79th formed square on the right, as the cavalry had begun to attempt our right flank. The ground we were on was ploughed, and extremely soft, on account of so much rain a few days before this; and it was with a great deal of difficulty we could get our feet lifted without leaving our shoes behind; and many a hardy soldier left his brogues and came on barefooted.

As soon as we got out of the field we

mounted the height, where we had good footing on firm ground. We then came to the charge with three cheers, the enemy about forty yards in front of us. Not being able to stand the Highlander's rage in the charge, the French went to the right about, and flew through the fields like a flock of mad geese, and made for their redoubts like cowards, there to lurk and annoy us with their recreant shots. When we got to the top of the height there was a tremendous fire opened upon us from the enemy's redoubts and breastworks.

As soon as we got within 200 yards of their works we were halted in a road that had been cut out between two heights. Here we had a very fine cover. We remained here about an hour. Our loss was very great before we got into this road; and hard was that part of the day, but harder still was the remainder of it to be, for the bloody fight had not begun with the 42d: all yet was in the ordinary way of battle; what followed, was more deadly than Burgos.

The redoubts on the left were to be attacked by the Spanish army; and the attack of the works on the right was to be delayed till those on the left were carried. This was a wise measure; though some of us thought we ought to have gone pell-mell to work with the whole, and complete their conquest at one and the same time.

The Spanish army then made the attack on the left of the enemy's works, but were beat back with an immense loss before they reached the redoubts.

I heard it often said that my Lord Wellington, when he saw the Spaniards get such a beating, sent part of his staff amongst them to encourage them. They then attacked again with amazing boldness, and with double spirit, when they knew that they had English officers leading them on. I have heard it said that when they got into the works, they were so savage that they put every man to the bayonet, and took no prisoners. This was cruel, but revenge is sweet; and though the Spaniards are not a

vindictive people, the remembrance of their wrongs never lost an opportunity of retaliation.

General Pack came up to our commanding officer, Colonel Maccara, as soon as we were to attack, and ordered him to form the regiment by wings, or half battalions, in a ploughed field on the side of this road. We were to march by wings on the works. Whenever we were formed, our orders were to charge the breast-works and the redoubt in front of us. Colonel Maccara then gave us orders to file by companies up the face of the side of the road; but it was on our hands and feet.

As soon as the enemy observed us forming our line, in a moment they opened upon us a most tremendous fire of grape, shells, and small shot, that mowed down our ranks as we formed them. It was shocking to see the carnage that was made on this spot. Maccara could hardly get the right wing formed; it was mostly all cut off before the men got to the works, although the distance was only 200 yards. I belonged

to the right wing: it was, for all the world, like a target to the enemy; for we received their first fire; and it raged most dreadfully. The smoke and fire obscured the sky; the cannon and musketry roared like thunder; and many a hero fell to rise no more.

As soon as the wing was about formed, the colonel went off at the charge with us, cheering all the way, and the left wing followed in the same gallant style. All the troops who saw us start cheered us, and "Bravo, forty-second," could be heard above all the noise of guns. "Hurra!—Hurra!—Hurra!" sounded on all sides of us, from the division, Portuguese, and Spaniards: all saw the work of death we were going on; all saw our men fall like the fruit off an apple-tree, when shook by the boisterous blast of the sky. I had escaped hitherto in all the actions I had been in, but I had no hope now of leaving the field alive. The shot was whizzing past us like hail; most of the right wing that were killed and wounded received two, three,

and some several shots at once. The man on my right hand received six grape shots in his body, and fell like a log; and his brother, on his other side, was wounded at the same time. When about fifty yards from the redoubt, I received a shot through my right arm, and was obliged to halt; but I was almost sure of receiving another before I could get under cover. I went to the rear a few yards, (my arm hung motionless by my side) and lay down in the furrow of two rigs, thinking this might afford me some cover. I had hardly stretched myself on the wet ground when a round shot from a cannon covered me almost wholly over with earth; then I started to my feet again, and made for the road we had marched from, knowing that I would have good cover there. My wound bled very much. I could not get it bound up. I had about half a mile to walk to the ground the surgeons were on; but I was obliged to halt by the way, I became so weak from the stream of blood flowing down my arm,

I was several times so dizzy I could with difficulty stand and look round me; then I would become sick and languid. I was parched up with thirst; but no water could I get.

At this moment our artillery were passing me, making for the position we had taken up: one of them dismounted from his horse, seeing the state I was in, and gave me a draught of wine out of his canteen. I bade God bless him. "You deserve it," said he, "if it was gold you could drink, for you have fought hard: away with you to the doctors; there are crowds of the 42d about them, down at those houses which we passed." Again I thanked this brave artillery-man: he clapped spurs to his horse, and was off after the guns.

I revived very much after I had swallowed the wine, and made the best of my way for the houses he pointed to. It was full two hours before the surgeons could look at my arm; they were amputating legs and

arms so fast, and so many, it was very lamentable to be two hours the spectator of this sight.

I must now go to the regiment, and, as I received my information of what befel the 42d on that memorable day, the 10th of April, from one of the men who was in the action till the last of it, give you such details as may keep the regiment in your view till I again joined it.

The redoubts and breast-works were taken at the point of the bayonet, but the 42d were not long in possession of them till the enemy, greatly reinforced, seeing the handful of men that was left of the 42d, and no other support with them in the works, they attacked the works again, and overpowered the few brave men who were left.

Dreadful was the havoc that was made in the redoubt before the 42d were put out of it. I have heard it said, over and over again, that they could get out of the redoubt at any place, as the ditch that sur-

rounded it was filled with the dead and wounded.

The general then sent the 79th to support the 42d, and make another attack. The two regiments then charged the redoubt again, and beat the enemy out of it with great slaughter. The 79th fought like lions, I was told the enemy were then beaten from their strong position, and retreated into the city of Toulouse. The British did not follow, as the canal was between them and the town. Next morning the enemy retreated from Toulouse, and the British followed.

The loss of the 42d on this memorable day, was 414 private men and 27 officers, in killed and wounded. Of the company to which I belonged there were only five men left. We had 1 captain, 1 subaltern officer, 3 sergeants, 47 rank and file, killed and wounded; 1 subaltern officer, 1 corporal, and 4 privates, left: but a good many men joined the regiment in a few days that received slight wounds.

As soon as I got my wound dressed, I felt easy, but I was excessively weak from the loss of blood. The bullet hit my right arm between the elbow and wrist; and as I pulled off my jacket, a half ball dropped out of the sleeve: it had passed directly through between the two bones in the lower branch of the arm. In fourteen days after this the other half of the ball oozed out, after causing me immense pain, and a consultation of the doctors, as to whether they should dock me by the elbow. If they had I should have been minus an arm, which I now use as well as ever I used it in my life.

As soon as I got my wound dressed, I and six more of the company I belonged to, went about a mile to some houses, that we might rest ourselves. There was no hospital for the army. All the surrounding houses without the town were taken possession of by the wounded. The inhabitants had all fled into Toulouse. There were three featherbeds in the house to which my party went, for the six men

looked upon me as *their* corporal. There was a guard belonging to the Commissariat in this house: their noise would have kept a fatigued man awake, but I was kept so by the pain of my wound, which now smarted more than ever. Next day I was feverish, and could hardly walk to the door: the guard that were in the house behaved kindly to us; they brought us wine from the cellar, water from a well, and a sheep from some snug quarter; and here for three days they nursed us before any one else came to see us.

On the third day the head surgeon came and looked at our wounds, and told us hospitals were getting ready for us in Toulouse, and that peace had been made before the battle was fought. I cannot tell how this news affected me; I was sick and wounded; and I thought on the thousands who had fallen a few days before. My period of service was up, and I cast my eyes on my native land: but all was dark and disheartening. Ten years, the best of my life, had been spent among the lowest

of the army; my habits were fixed, I thought, and a soldier I must continue! I had, in that time, lost all my family but one brother: still he was my brother, affectionate and kind; and my country was dear to me even in this poor and miserable plight I now lay in. Darkness fell upon me, as a thousand schemes engaged my thoughts: at length sleep stole my senses, and I had some dozing, dreaming naps;—the visions of by-gone days, battles, places, home, my wound, poor, friendless, and maimed, perhaps for life:—these were my dreams.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOSPITAL.—AND RETURN TO ENGLAND.

THE morning broke in upon my thoughts with its gladdening light, and shortly after a dragoon came to the door; then another, and another, and another, with their horses, to convey us to the hospital. We had very good, clean bedding in the hospital I was in; and I never saw so much kindness shewn to soldiers, either at home or abroad, as was shewn by the inhabitants of Toulouse to the wounded British. They brought every thing fitting from their houses and hospitals for us; wine, and meat, and cordials, and sweetmeats, for those who were very low: and in this manner they attended us, till our own surgeons had got every thing ready, and even after that.

There were even two ladies attended the hospital I was in for a week afterwards, and went round with the surgeon, to see all the wounded: they were attended by their servants, who carried wine and sweetmeats. To those poor fellows who had suffered amputation they sent daily a good dinner.

I was three weeks in this hospital, but I was never one day confined to my bed: I went to my captain's lodgings, where he was laying wounded, to inquire how he did; I then saw him. He asked me, if I wanted any money, or any thing; and he gave me whatever money I wanted. I was as comfortable as my wound would let me all the time I was in Toulouse.

Orders then came that all the men who could be removed were to be sent down the river to Bourdeaux, and put in hospitals there. In a very few days I embarked. We were two nights on the river. As soon as we arrived at Bourdeaux we were put into hospitals; that in which I was I found very clean and comfortable. My arm was still very sore and painful; splinters of

bone were occasionally coming out at the wound; but there was not a fracture of either bones: one, however, was evidently injured.

Here we were superintended by a general surgeon, who had just come from England, about a week after our arrival: before that time we had good allowance; but he took part of our meat from us and part of our wine too; and told us, he never saw such a set of ragamuffins belonging to the British army. Very likely not. But there were men belonging to every corps in the army in this hospital; though mostly of the Highland brigade. Every day he came into the hospital he was on the top of us, finding fault and abusing us. We did not look well, it is true; for our clothing was old, and our coats were patched with different colours; and we had lost all we had in the world, except the buttons of our clothes, that told our regiments: but I think these buttons might have excited his respect for our regiments, if the man of plasters had no sympathy for our hardships. How could

we, after we had been wounded so, keep ourselves in proper order? If he had been with us that last campaign, he would have said nothing; but I suppose the fellow had never seen service: and he kept strong guards on the hospital, to keep us in, as if we had been a parcel of prisoners.

General Pack at last came to Bourdeaux: he was our old general, and knew us almost man by man in the Highland brigade; and he had been wounded after the enemy's works were taken. As soon as he came to Bourdeaux he came to the hospital, to see the men of his brigade, that had been wounded. We could speak to him, for he was a soldier; he had been in the midst of it with us, where every man did his duty. We reported to our own general the conduct of this general doctor.

Pack heard us patiently, and then said, "My lads, I would not mind him; you have the appearance of brave soldiers, and that is sufficient."

Next day our former allowance was served out to most of us, except to men that had

been very badly wounded; and our general surgeon came but seldom to see us. I was three weeks in this hospital when a great part of the army came down to a camp that had been formed a few leagues from Bourdeaux, on its way to England. The Highland brigade was in their number, and all the men that had got well, or nearly so, were sent to their regiments. I was nearly well, and was very happy to be sent to camp, for I was tired to death of the hospital.

We were about a week in this camp, when vessels were got ready to receive us, and we embarked on board of the transports for England.

While on the salt sea, sailing to Ireland, I was pensive enough, remembering all I had gone through; the want, cold, fatigue, and danger, in which I had my share with the regiment, since I joined it, especially since we came into Spain, first and last. But what weighed upon my spirits was the time I had lost, and now to be discharged with hardly as much money as would carry

me home. Ah! how bitter is the thought to think of the good service I performed day and night, at home and abroad, in garrison, and in camp, and in battle, for eleven years, and to receive no benefit for it. Hundreds have it, that saw not the hundredth part of the service I saw.

Our destination was Cork in Ireland, and we had a very fine passage to the Cove, where we disembarked and marched to Cork. The inhabitants of this fine city received us with great kindness and three cheers. You would have thought the whole of the town had been turned out to see us. I suppose it was to view us after so much fatigue and so many battles as the 42d had been in.

We tarried in Cork the matter of a fortnight, and then marched to Nass, where we halted a few weeks more; then the route came for us to march to Kilkenny. We had very good quarters here, and our duty was very easy.

About the 14th of October, 1814, orders came that all the men who had completed

their term of service should be discharged. This was good news to me, for I was tired of soldiering, though the prospect before me was not more bright. On the 31st of that month 120 men were discharged; some with pensions, but most without any reward for their perilous services, and among the latter number was the writer of this Journal, which is therefore now brought to an

END.

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